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the Portrait Issue

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HENDRIK KERSTENS

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On the Cover: Portrait of actress Kirsten Dunst by Matthew Rolston (see page 60).

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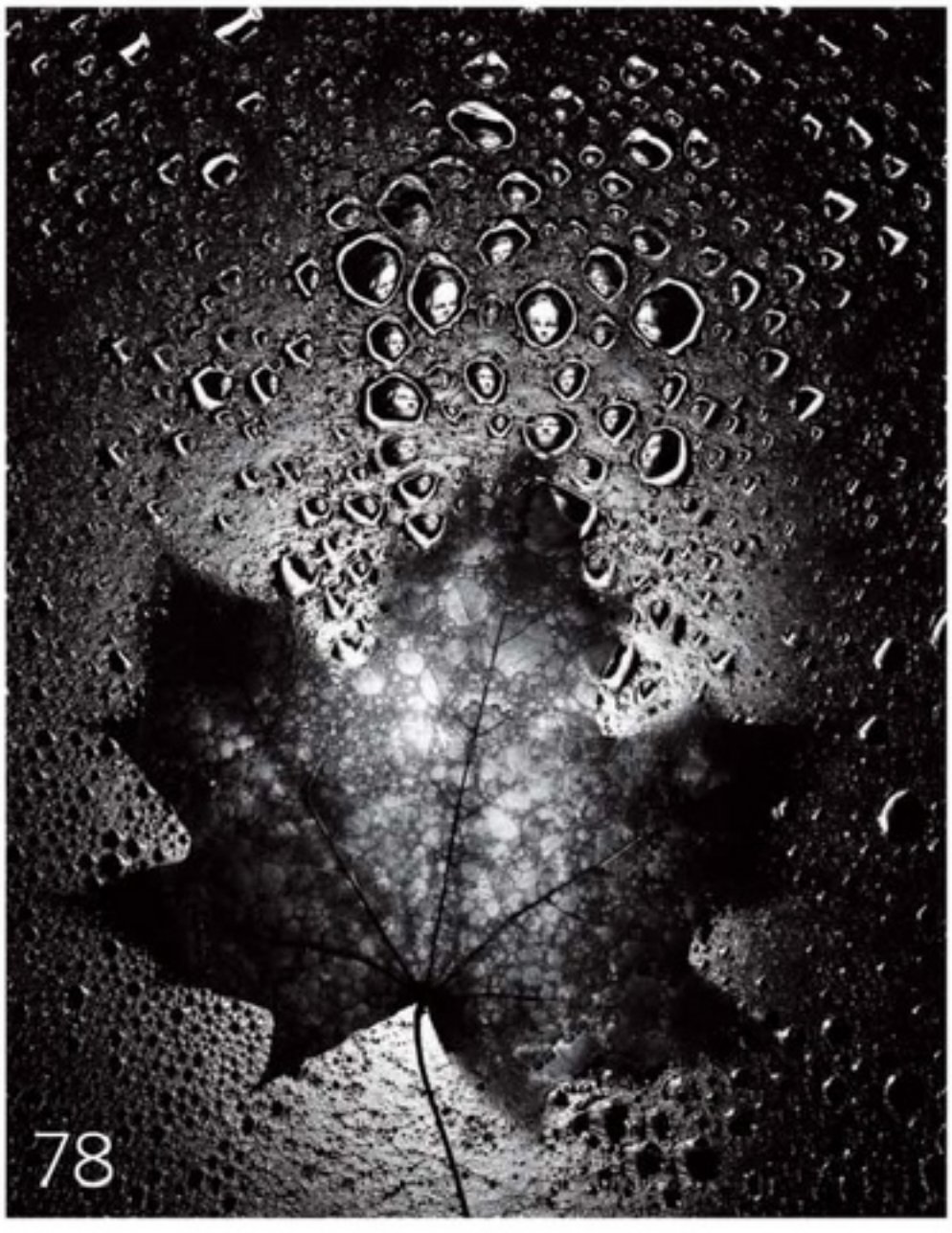

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A classic candid by one of our top ten wedding photographers, Jeff Ascough.

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WHAT DO THE **BEST WEDDING SHOOTERS** HAVE IN COMMON? THEY STAY TRUE TO THEIR STYLE, BUT STILL TAKE RISKS.

Let's talk about high-pressure jobs. Those guys who run cranes on high-rise construction sites? That looks hard. Cops and firefighters risk their lives for their work. Siegfried and Roy? Look what happened to them.

But angry white tigers are nothing compared to a genuine, fearsome bridezilla. You want to see someone operate under pressure? Go to a wedding and watch the hired photographer.

Tony Corbell, who produced our list of America's top ten wedding photographers (see page 29), knows all about the job. He started his career in photography in the late 1970s as a wedding and portrait photographer in Texas, then moved to San Diego and ended up in Santa Barbara, where he taught at the Brooks Institute of Photography. After that came a stint on the East Coast as the senior corporate photographer and manager of corporate relations for Hasselblad USA. The lure of California proving too much, he eventually returned to San Diego and relaunched his commercial career. That includes doing six or seven high-end weddings a year. Most recently he went to work for the Nik software company, but he continues to shoot weddings and to teach photo workshops. (He'll be leading an *American Photo* Mentor Series workshop in New York City in June; go to *AmericanPhotoMag.com* and click on the Mentor Series button for more information.) For the past seven years Corbell has also served as the jury chairman for exhibitions for the Wedding & Portrait Photographers International organization. He knows what's been going on in wedding photography during the past decade.

Corbell has seen wedding photography shift from what he calls traditional "plastic portraiture" into a more reality-based "wedding photojournalism" in which photographers cover the nuptials "like a big event." Today, he says, brides are demanding more from photographers: "They see the glamorous fashion photography in bridal magazines, and they want that for themselves," he says. But bigger demands mean that good photographers can charge big, too—up to $10,000 and more—for a high-end wedding. That's what happens when you mix love and art.

Tony Corbell

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I'm afraid this note may be a little more philosophical than usual. It comes from having had another birthday and from seeing my latest passport photo.

The birthday I couldn't do anything about. The photo (at right), well, I should have combed my hair or something. Calling this portrait artless would be an understatement, and yet for me it is not without interest. I couldn't help but compare the new passport picture to my last two. In my passport from the 1980s (above) I look like a guy who could swim a mile without stopping. In my passport from the 1990s (below) I look like a junior CIA officer; now I look like a guy who's on a work-release program—or the weary father of a teenage daughter. Who says photographs lie?

I thought I'd share all this with you because lately all of us at *American Photo* have been thinking quite a bit about portraits: about what they can reveal and what they can't, and about the astonishing power of photographers to define a personality in a fraction of a second—to flatter or to portray unsparingly, or simply to document for the sake of history. The faith the world puts in portraits is an awesome thing. We rely on them for proof of our own identities, as I certainly do with my passport photo, which is literally the face I present to the world. But we need that proof in other ways as well. Who we are, what we do, those we love and admire, those great public figures we follow, all eventually

must fade. The portraits remain. Finally they become evidence for others to paste in albums, publish in books, or collect as art. I suspect that many of us, when we think about the world we live in now or when we think about the past, think about faces we've seen in pictures. You see? I told you I was feeling philosophical.

We began working on this special issue on portraiture last fall, after taking note of several new books on the subject. Indeed, as you'll see in the portfolio that begins on page 51, there may be more interest in portraiture among photographers now than ever before, with new work from masters of the form, like Annie Liebovitz, Albert Watson, and Matthew Rolston, as well as a new generation of photographers such as Mark Laita and Michal Chelbin. We turned to these photographers (and others) to produce a virtual workshop on portraiture in all its forms. In addition, the featured photographers give us a Master Class in portraiture. And finally *AP* contributor Judy Gelman Myers hit the phones to ask a number of people in photography to name what they consider the greatest photographic portrait ever made. We'd like to hear your choices as well.

Clockwise from top: 1980s; current; 1990s.

David Schonauer, EDITOR IN CHIEF

Does the sun stay in the sky longer for the Nikon pro?

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After Brooklyn resident **Ghada Khunji** made a series of photographs at the Calvary Pentecostal Campground in Ashland, Virginia, she put the negatives aside for several years. "This was just one part of a broader series about unusual scenes in America," she recalls. But in 2006, Khunji decided to print the images—which captured the congregation's dramatic worship rituals during a weekend in 1998—and enter them in photo contests, including *American Photo*'s 2007 Images of the Year competition. Here, Khunji's work won not only the Photojournalism category but also the Grand Prize, announced in December 2006 at a gala event at New York City's Splashlight Studios. (See People, page 24.) Khunji's winning work—printed large-scale on **Epson Premium Luster Photo Paper** by Nash Editions—was unveiled during the party as her Grand Prize was announced. "The funny thing is, I walked into this fabulous party," Khunji recalls, "and all the contest winners' work was on the walls except for mine! I kept looking for my pictures—in the main room, in the hallways, in the bathroom—and then they unveiled them. I was surprised—and ecstatic!"

Khunji has recently won several other accolades, including a 2006 Lucie Award for her separate photographic series in the Dominican Republic. "The great thing is, I can now continue to travel and photograph, with a bit more status after receiving awards," she says. "I just want to get out there and shoot some more."

GHADA KHUNJI

© HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON

Cartier-Bresson's "Marseille, France," 1931.

SEE IT NOW

▶ PHOTO MEMORY

And I Still See Their Faces: The Vanished World of Polish Jewry, on view at the Yeshiva University Museum from March 1 to June 24, includes 450 prewar photographs, a fraction of the more than 9,000 contributed to the Shalom Foundation since its 1994 call for photographs of Polish Jews.

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ICP'S TRIPLE TRIUMPH

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A trio of vintage masters is on view at the International Center of Photography in New York City through April 29. *Martin Munkacsi: Think While You Shoot!* is an homage to the German genius credited with releasing fashion photography from the studio and with doffing static poses in favor of improvised movement. ICP is also hosting a collection of photos and film stills of Louise Brooks, best known for her role as Lulu in the classic 1929 German film *Pandora's Box*, and other "powerful women of early German cinema." Last but definitely not least, *Henri Cartier-Bresson's Scrapbook: Photographs, 1932–46* unveils the master's own notes for his post-WWII "retrospective" at New York's Museum of Modern Art. —MIKI JOHNSON

▼ WAR WOUNDS

In 2006 eminent photojournalist James Nachtwey returned to Iraq for his first trip to the country since being wounded in a 2003 grenade blast in Baghdad. Not surprisingly, Nachtwey chose to train his camera on the military medical system—the stoic service members who treat soldiers in the field as well as the wounded's recovery stateside. The result, titled *The Sacrifice*, is on view at New York's 401 Projects gallery through March 18.

JOHN WOOLF

◀ ON DISPLAY

The Photography Show 07, run by The Association of International Photography Art Dealers, returns for a second year to New York's 7th Regiment Armory, where more than 90 fine-art photography exhibitors will set up shop from April 12 through April 15.

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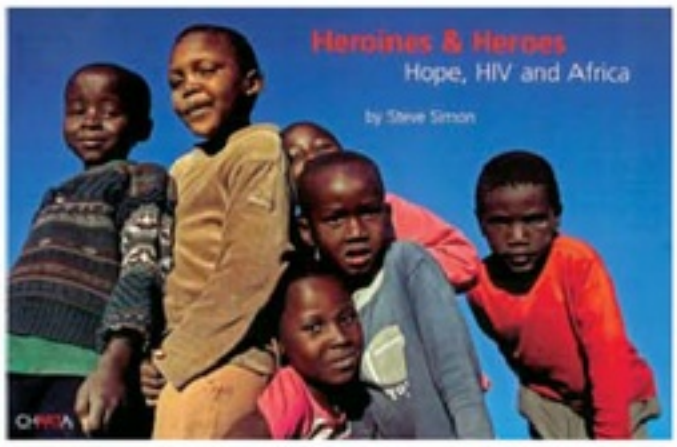


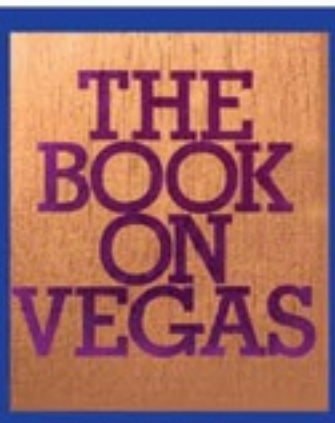
Simon's photos show how AIDS is "woven into the fabric of everyday life."

© STEVE SIMON (5)

AIDS...AND HOPE
A REPORT FROM AFRICA
BOOKS

Canadian photojournalist Steve Simon's most recent book contains an extraordinary number of bright color images showing people smiling—extraordinary, that is, considering the subject. "I wanted to show the harsh realities of AIDS in Africa, but also that life itself was continuing there," he says of *Heroines & Heroes: Hope, HIV and Africa* (Charta, $35).

The book is the result of several trips made over the course of five years to document the effects of the disease in Zambia, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Lesotho. "When you consider that in some places in Africa one in three people is infected with HIV, you understand how the disease has become woven into the fabric of everyday life there," says Simon. To show that, he photographed not only hospital wards but also weddings and aerobics classes for people with HIV. "You can find heroes and heroines everywhere," he says. —JEFFREY ELBIES



BOOK LIST

The Book on Vegas (Greybull Press, $125) What happens in Vegas may stay there, but apparently it also gets photographed. This 328-page collection is an artistic jackpot with work by Joel Meyerowitz, Mary Ellen Mark, Helmut Newton, Gary Winogrand, and about 45 other photographers.

Gerrit Engel: Manhattan, New York (Schirmer/Mosel, $100) Too many architectural photographers feel the need to incorporate eccentric angles and odd distortions when confronted by a subject as awesome as the landmark buildings of Manhattan. German-born Gerrit Engel plays it perfectly straight.

Bare Witness: Photographs by Gordon Parks (Cantor Arts Center/Skira, $37) The catalog for an exhibition opening in March at the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University, this book features 73 images made by the famed *Life* magazine photographer, who died in March, 2006. (The exhibition runs through July 1.)

Koudelka (Aperture, $65) Josef Koudelka launched his career by anonymously photographing the Soviet invasion of Prague in 1968. Granted political asylum in the West in 1970, he became a member of Magnum and one of the most admired photojournalists in the world. Incredibly, this book represents his first career overview.

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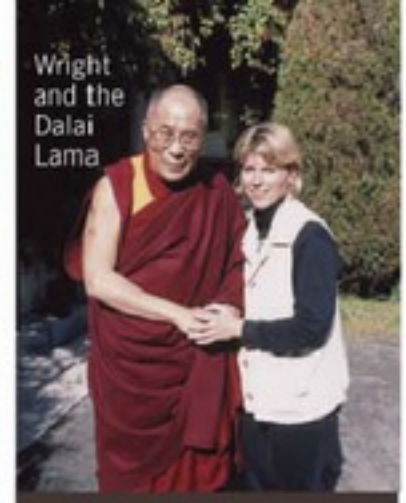
SAMSUNG

ALISON WRIGHT (1)



Wright and the Dalai Lama

Q&A ALISON WRIGHT

Wright recovers in California in 2001.

POEL SNIDER

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

ALISON WRIGHT'S LONG TRIP BACK

TRAVEL

In her end-of-the-year newsletter to friends, photographer Alison Wright told of trips she took in 2006 to places like the Arctic, the Seychelle Islands, Ladakh in northern India, Tibet, China, and Chile. The missive represented more than just a travelog, however. It was also an acknowledgement by Wright that her life was back in order.

Seven years ago, on a winding road in Laos, that life almost ended. Wright, then 38, was riding in a bus when it was hit by a logging truck. The crash caused such extensive injuries that doctors later told her she'd be lucky to walk again, let alone resume her career as a travel photographer for magazines like *National Geographic Adventure, Time,* and *Forbes.*

But Wright recovered and this year will be leading photo tours of Bhutan for National Geographic Expeditions. "Actually," she says, "I think it all made me a better photographer." —JEFFREY ELBIES

Tell us about your injuries.
The point of impact, where the truck hit the bus, was the seat in which I was sitting. The crash broke my back, pelvis, coccyx, and all my ribs. My left arm was shredded to the bone. My spleen was sliced in half, and my diaphragm and lungs were punctured. My heart, stomach, and intestines were torn loose and lodged in my shoulder area.

What did you think when the doctors said you'd never walk?
I told them I'd celebrate my 40th birthday at the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro in Kenya. They wanted to send me to a shrink. But I made the summit in 2001.

What did you learn from the accident?
To carry medevac insurance when I travel. Getting back from Asia to California cost $25,000. Now I have insurance from a company called MedjetAssist (visit *medjetassist.com*). I also have an AAA gold card, which gets me $25,000 in medevac insurance. *For the full Q&A, visit* AmericanPhotoMag.com.

1. One of Wright's recent projects was a documentary series on poverty in America. Here, a portrait of a Navaho family.

2. A hunter from Wright's 2006 trip to Mongolia.

3. From a 2005 project on Japanese geisha.

4. A Tibetan nomad boy, from Wright's 2003 book, *Faces of Hope* (New World Library), a look at children in the developing countries of the Third World.

5. Traveling in Sri Lanka, Wright photographed the wreckage of a train crushed under the tsunami that devastated the area in 2004. Some 1,200 people on the train were killed.

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PEOPLE

1. Competition winners (from left) Ted Sabarese, Aaron Hawks, Andrea Huber, an associate representing Vincent Dixon, and Ghada Khunji.

2. Photographer Michael Grecco (left), one of the guests at the gala, and Redux photo agency owner Marcel Saba, who was a competition judge.

3. From left: Tim Grey of contest sponsor Microsoft; *American Photo* editor in chief David Schonauer; Stewart Henderson of sponsor Samsung Camera; and *AP* publisher Jeffrey Roberts.

4. Jose Hernández of Samsung Camera, with one of the guest models.

5. From left: *AP* assistant editor Miki Johnson; Jasmine DeFoore of the Redux agency; and Jay DeFoore, editor of *popphoto.com*.

6. *AP* marketing director Kayla Lindquist with Dan Steinhardt of Epson.

7. Party guests viewing some of the winning images, printed on the new Epson Stylus Pro 3800.

8. Photojournalist Ron Haviv and friend.

9. Two guests holding a copy of the special Images of the Year 2007 (January/February) issue of *AP*.

10. Khunji (left) seeing her photos unveiled as she is presented with the Grand Prize award.

UNVEILING THE IMAGES OF THE YEAR

A SPARKLING *AP* EVENT

Those of you who saw our January/February issue know that the first-ever *American Photo* Images of the Year competition turned up some exceptional photography. Though we previously revealed the winners of the competition's six categories, the Grand Prize winner was kept a big secret, until a gala event held at New York City's Splashlight Studios on December 7.

And the winner was...Ghada Khunji, whose images of evangelical Christians were also chosen as tops in the Photojournalism/Documentary category.

The other category winners were New York–based photographer Ted Sabarese (Wedding/Portraits); Aaron Hawks of Berkeley, California (Personal Work); Andrea Huber of Laguna Niguel, California (Student Work); London-based photographer Julia Fullerton-Batten (Editorial); and New York–based Vincent Dixon (Advertising).

The winners shared $15,000 in prizes from sponsors Microsoft, Samsung Camera, Epson, Digital Railroad, and Light Crafts.

Ghada Khunji

Q&A GHADA KHUNJI

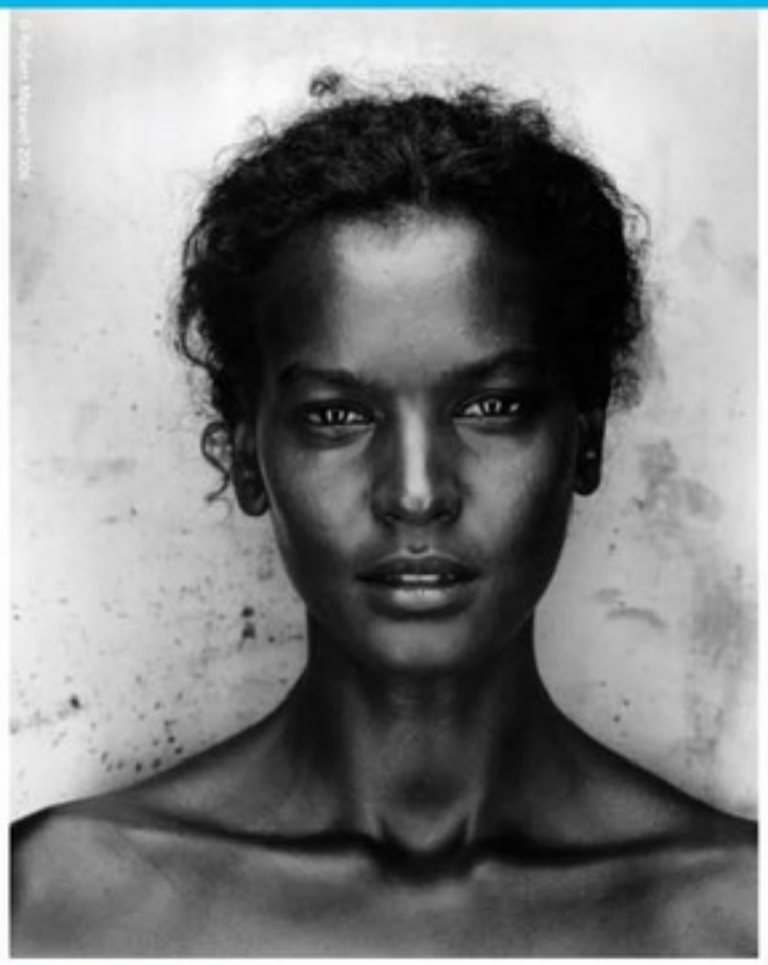
How did it feel to win the Grand Prize in the *American Photo* Images of the Year contest?
The night they announced it, I felt like I was on top of the world! Just to have my work published in *American Photo* is terrific. I mean, my parents in Bahrain, where I'm from, can go out and buy this magazine.

You've received several recent awards, including a Lucie. When it rains it pours?
It seems like it's my year. I just started entering competitions to see what would happen. But recognition gives you confidence to keep working.

What are your plans for the future?
I want to go back and revisit places I've photographed—like Cuba and the Dominican Republic—and also travel to new places. There is so much to shoot!

MATT CARASELLA (12)

PALM SPRINGS



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Camera in hand, you'll get to know the best of this historic city where a rich past melds seamlessly with a bright, metropolitan future. Capture her expansive open-air plazas with the backdrop of the legendary Sierra Madre mountains at dusk and the twinkling lights of her illuminated cathedrals at night. Finished in 1618 after more than 50 years of work, the Cathedral is the jewel of Guadalajara and represents a conglomerate of architectural styles that include gothic, neoclassical, and Spanish colonial elements.

Imagine having the chance to photograph this vibrant city under the tutelage of two professional photographers who will teach you not only valuable technical skills, but the secret to street shooting and the tips that have taken their entire careers to master. Your mentors for this trip, Douglas Menuez and Dave Black, have years of experience and are dedicated to helping you improve your photography. Each day has been meticulously planned to make the most of your trip, including initial group reviews and time set aside with your mentor to review the images you've shot throughout the day.

After soaking up the glamor and tradition of Guadalajara, we'll traverse winding mountain roads to the alpine town of Talpapa, "the land of colors," surrounded by forests, lakes, and streams. In the center of town, wander through the many arches and shoot enchanting red tile roofs and white washed wooden columns in the golden afternoon light. No trek to the Jalisco region would be complete without a trip to the Sierra Madre Mountains to practice your landscape photography among waterfalls, shady trails, and breathtaking canyon views.

We'll tour La Primavera, Don Julio's famed tequila distillery in Los Altos where the rich culture of a long-standing tradition still imbues every bottle. Next, we'll visit the nearby Hacienda El Carmen and Hacienda Sepulveda, where the ebullience of colonial Mexico radiates from elegant chandeliers, and the tiered arches and sprawling green lawns harken back to another era.

Before we leave the Jalisco region, we'll have front row seats at a traditional bullfight, with special access to shoot the rough and tumble bulls as they fall under the spell of traditional matadors in gilded costumes. Don't miss this once in a lifetime trip with two of the greatest photographers in the world!

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STATE OF THE ART

THE TOP 10 WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHERS IN THE WORLD

Wedding photographers used to get no respect, either from customers or other pros. It's only recently that they've been widely recognized for their multifaceted talent. In the course of a wedding day they serve as architectural photographer, documenting locations; as portrait photographer, flattering the day's key players; as product photographer, shooting a closeup of the rings; and as photojournalist, telling a story, under pressure, with pictures. One indication of wedding photographers' new status is that they are being asked to do more and more work outside their geographic bases. Another is that they earn more money than ever. We asked industry maven **Tony Corbell** (see page 6) to tell us about ten of the best wedding photographers in the world. "These people don't miss a thing," says Corbell.

Joe Buissink photographed this bride in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. For more on Buissink, see page 32.

© DENIS REGGIE

Reggie's color take of Maria Shriver at her 1986 wedding to Arnold Schwarzenegger (here); Ascough's black and white of a wedding dress being laced up (right).

Denis Reggie

Location: Atlanta, Georgia **Website:** *denisreggie.com* • During his 25-year career, Reggie has almost single-handedly redefined wedding photography. He's shot hundreds of celebrity weddings, including the marriage of Arnold Schwarzenegger to Maria Shriver (left) and John Kennedy Jr. to Carolyn Bessette, at which he made one of the most famous wedding pictures of all time—of the groom kissing the bride's hand as they step out of the one-room church where the ceremony was held.

Reggie earned his fame by practicing and advocating a new style of wedding photography that he called "wedding photojournalism." His approach broke from the usual stiff, posed pictures, "covering" the nuptials as a real-life event. "I am a quiet observer of the wedding," he says, "searching for moments that define the story of the day."

Jeff Ascough

Location: Littleover, Derbyshire, England **Website:** *jeffascough.net* • The first photographer in the UK to shoot weddings with a photojournalist's style, Ascough garnered global attention when his wedding work was featured in a 2004 issue of the *Washington Post*. Given his style, it makes sense that Ascough cites Henri Cartier-Bresson as an influence. While many wedding photographers shoot nonstop, he often composes an image and waits for the "decisive moment."

Ascough relies on fast lenses so he can shoot by available light. That practice also lessens the need for strobe, which the photographer avoids whenever possible. Ascough's artistry often nets him assignments with British rock stars and other celebrities—brides and grooms who are willing to trade a little glamour for more style.

© JEFF ASCOUGH

Buissink's elegant Malibu bride.

© JOE BUISSINK

Joe Buissink

Location: Beverly Hills, California **Website:** *joebuissink.com* • All you probably need to know about Buissink's talent is that none other than Annie Leibovitz has hired him. Twice, in fact—once to shoot her sister's wedding, then to shoot her cousin's. Getting the nod from America's most famous photographer was "truly humbling," says Buissink. Yet in the past 12 years Buissink has shot weddings for nearly as many celebrities as Annie has portrayed, including Jessica Simpson, Barry Bonds, and Jennifer Lopez.

You'd think celebrities would be demanding clients, but Buissink says he doesn't really worry about what his customers want. He assumes that when someone hires him, it's on the basis of the

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Bambi Cantrell's glamorous kiss (top right) and impressionistic bride (here).

WACOM

"I gave it a whirl."

- Adale Brewer Van Dam, *Photographer*

Adale is a professional photographer and an artist in Northern California. Several years ago, she picked up a Wacom pen for the first time at a conference and decided to give it a whirl. That's when she realized that it was a tool she couldn't live without.

Adale purchased an Intuos3 9x12 and has since found that the pen provides her with an increased level of control, improves her workflow efficiency, and helps her work more comfortably. The pen has helped Adale harness the full power of applications like Adobe® Photoshop® and Corel® Painter™ to get the finished look she wants.

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From a Tuscan "destination" wedding (above); readying the bride (here), both by the Todds.

STATE OF THE ART

work he's done and the style of that work. That work, in turn, is what Buissink likes to do, and does best. "Always remain true to yourself," he says.

Nonetheless, Buissink insists that it's very important for a wedding specialist to evolve stylistically—to explore new ideas and techniques, and to take artistic risks. As a starting point he preaches what he practices, shooting quickly and "flowing" with the constant stream of moments that make up a wedding day. "There's nothing more gratifying than seizing the moment with your camera," says the photographer.

Bambi Cantrell

Location: Pleasant Hill, California **Website:** *cantrellportrait.com* • There is probably no wedding photographer working today who can make a bride feel more beautiful than Cantrell can. She studies trends constantly, knows the top gown and shoe designers, and, most important, understands what brides want. She is, in fact, at the forefront of the movement to bring glamour to contemporary wedding photography. "I just wanted brides to see in their wedding photography the type of photographs they see in the wedding magazines," Cantrell explained in a recent lecture. "No one was doing that kind of work."

Shooting nuptials like a fashion photographer, Cantrell still has the needed reflexes—reacting to all the things that can go wrong on such a complicated, important day. "I once had to photograph a bride in a hotel restroom," she says. "The images actually won some awards!" The proof of Cantrell's talent can be seen in the way wedding photographers around the world have followed her creative lead, and in how-to books such as *The Art of Digital Wedding Photography* (written with Skip Cohen, Amphoto, $30).

Alisha and Brook Todd

Location: San Francisco **Website:** *alishabrook.com* • Just a few years ago this couple often could be found sitting in the front row of photo seminars around the country, and staying after to ask questions of the featured shooter. They clearly were paying attention: The Todds have opened a new studio in San Francisco's Hearst Building and have photographed a wedding on the *Oprah Winfrey Show* for a segment called "Fantasy Dreams Come True." They've also bounced back from an accident in which a deck packed with wedding guests collapsed, injuring Alisha and 30 others.

As with nearly all the other wedding photographers in our top ten, the Todds report that their clients usually let them call the shots, literally. The style that gives brides and grooms such confidence is a smooth blend of documentary and fine art. And art it is, employing everything from tilted frames, tight, often whimsical crops, and rough borders with the look of filed-out negative carriers—not to mention prints on fiber-based paper. "We don't see things as they are," says Alisha, quoting French diarist Anaïs Nin. "We see things as we are."

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Christian Oth's elegant image of a bridesmaid, captured moments before the ceremony, demonstrates that wedding photographers do not have to resort to posing subjects and setting up cumbersome lighting equipment to achieve a classic look. All that's needed are quick reflexes, fast lenses, and a sharp eye.

© CHRISTIAN OTH PHOTOGRAPHY

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Jose Villa

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In a digital age, is it possible to have a renaissance in film? Jose Villa says, yes. "In this shot the light was changing constantly, the shadows growing longer by the second, but Pro 400H handled the ever-changing, challenging conditions beautifully. The film not only gave me smooth gradation from highlight to shadow but also superb skin tones as I moved in closer." Equally important after a long day, Pro 400H is optimized for scanning, providing ultimate compatibility with today's digital workflow. So, as the sun finally set, Jose was assured that he wouldn't be spending his evening hours in front of his computer.

FUJIFILM

© CHRISTIAN OTH PHOTOGRAPHY

Oth's shot of Martha Stewart surprised by a live cupid.

Christian Oth

Location: New York; San Francisco **Website:** *christianothweddings.com* • For Oth, wedding photography offers all an artist could ask for. "It fuses together the grandeur of tradition, the poignancy of emotion, and the simplicity of realism," he says. Manhattanites hire Oth to capture that confluence in an "honest" way, he says. "I have a natural shooting style that doesn't leave anything out. I watch the story unfold—not just the main event but the quiet times, the telling details, and the unique personalities."

Having been a New York–based commercial photographer for ten years, Oth also understands how to market himself—presenting properly, and to the right people. But even that success hinges on an identifiable style. In such a competitive environment you can't afford to be a generalist, says Oth, who prefers to shoot by existing light with fast lenses and a single camera. Nor can you afford to be jaded. Oth still looks forward to every opportunity to help a bride and groom make the big day uniquely theirs.

© STEPHEN & JENNIFER BEBB/TYING THE KNOT PHOTOGRAPHY

The Bebbs capture Mr. and Mrs. Melville emerging from the church.

Stephen and Jennifer Bebb

Location: Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada **Website:** *tyingtheknot.net* • Stephen and Jennifer Bebb started their business as a part-time venture in 1999, and by the end of that year they'd both quit their jobs to pursue wedding photography full-time. Their lack of formal training hasn't been an obstacle to success. "I think people are drawn to our work not just because it's good, solid photography but because we bring enthusiasm and honest emotion to it," says Jennifer. "We see each wedding with a fresh eye." The Bebbs also credit the demand for their services to "breaking the rules" of wedding photography itself. One of their stylistic signatures is a quirky, dramatic selective focus, always done just right. They know how to make negative space work for them. And they avoid auxiliary light, shooting almost entirely wide-open with prime lenses.

That said, the Bebbs pride themselves on taking their visual cues from the wedding couple. The result is that clients trust them completely on the day of the wedding—and stop paying attention to the photographer. That, in turn, is a good recipe for better pictures.

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Here to far right, top: "Midnight in London"; "Larger Than Life"; "Wedding Paparazzi," by the versatile Ghionis.

© JERRY GHIONIS (3)

DAVID BECKSTEAD (2)

Beckstead's groom with his boys (here); a slow shutter speed blurs the bride (right).

Jerry Ghionis

Location: Victoria, Australia **Website:** *jerryghionis.com* • While many wedding photographers are attracted to black and white, Ghionis loves bold color. Indeed, his strong sense of color is partly what has garnered him two "Album of the Year" awards at the annual Wedding & Portrait Photographers International convention, where he's been the winningest photographer of the last four years. But his talent also includes a sense of timing—with a twist. "I don't believe in waiting for the moment," he says. "I believe in making the moment. I don't pose couples as much as I prompt and direct them in a way that makes them look both glamorous and natural."

Though he's based in Australia, Ghionis draws huge crowds in the U.S. as a speaker. But that fame hasn't prevented him from challenging and reinventing himself—as a photographer and in the business sense. It helps that Ghionis manages to fuse the three things he says his clients want most in their wedding photography: artistry, candor, and a "contemporary" feeling. "Spend five minutes every day chasing the impossible," he says. "It makes all the difference."

David Beckstead

Location: Kettle Falls, Washington **Website:** *davidbeckstead.com* • The World Wide Web has changed everything in professional photography, and no single discipline has been more affected than wedding photography. Beckstead and his wife and business parter, Kassandra, have used the Web and its associated technology to overcome what would once have been a major career obstacle: their location. They work outside a small town north of Spokane, Washington, in the rural eastern part of the state—yet their business is thriving thanks to a classy Website that does justice to David's stylish work.

The Becksteads' site immediately conveys the highly visual nature of David's approach to wedding photography. Click on "art" and you get a choice of online galleries identified not by content but by form: "light," "dark," "lines," "motion," "shadow," and, even more photographic, "flare." The power of Beckstead's composition, his use of unusual angles and blur, and his strong sense of light and shadow clearly appeal to his clients, who often give him complete freedom on the wedding day.

Beckstead recommends that all working photographers hire a professional Web designer to create a distinctive site for them. "The Internet has helped make photographers known throughout the world, not just locally," he says. "Our industry has never been this open before."

© KEVIN KUBOTA (3)

Kevin Kubota

Location: Bend, Oregon **Website:** *kkphoto-design.com* • Kubota had a career epiphany a few years ago, when he put a $10,000 wedding on his price list, thinking no couple would book at that level. He quickly learned they would. "I realized I'd been limiting my perceptions about wedding photography," he says.

It helps that Kubota offers acclaimed customer service, building a solid relationship with all his clients and always giving them more than they expect. Likewise, he stresses the importance of working with reliable professionals in every aspect of the business. Kubota should know, because he sells his own line of Photoshop actions, Kubota Image Tools (*kubotaimagetools.com*).

Yet when Kubota tells brides-to-be that he will "see what you feel," it isn't just marketing talk. Working unobtrusively, Kubota has always been able to capture fresh, expressive images. "Established photographers complain about all the newbies in the business," says Kubota, a 13-year veteran. "But wedding photography has never been more creative and free." ■

From a riverside ceremony (top left); sneaking some solitude (top right); a post-wedding joyride (here), all by Kubota.

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The mentors themselves are all experienced highly qualified professional photographers who are not only personally committed to photographic excellence but also dedicated to sharing their knowledge on everything from the basics of lighting, composition and digital enhancement to capturing the fabric of life in foreign cultures or achieving fresh perspectives on more familiar sights. Displaying and evaluating your images is also an integral part of the fun and the learning process, and participants are often astounded by the progress they make over the course of a single event. Because the interactive and social nature of the experience generates a strong spirit of fellowship among trekkers and mentors, there's always someone there to help. It's no wonder that participants are seldom satisfied with one **Mentor Series** trek—they come back for more!

To give you a better idea of who some of the mentors on the **Mentor Series** are and why they're so enthusiastic about these treks, we interviewed five of them so they can tell you in their own words on the following pages.

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DAVE BLACK

Dave Black is a sports/editorial photographer who's been shooting professionally for 26 years. His images have appeared in *Newsweek*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *Golf Digest*. A D2x™ and D200™ shooter who uses f/2.8 Nikkor® telephoto lenses for sports and shorter zooms for landscapes and portraits, he's covered 12 Olympics! He's also been a mentor for two years, leading excursions to Moab, Utah, Lexington, Kentucky, and Peru. "What I like best about these events is how everyone works together," says Black. "Yes, I'm the leader, but everyone has expertise in certain areas, and everyone pitches in to help. Then there's the joy that comes with helping people attain their goals. For example one trekker on the Peru trip was determined to learn about location lighting, so I took the time to show him the basics. Before the end of the tip he took a beautifully stylized portrait of a Peruvian weaver using 3 or 4 SB-800 Speedlights with warming gels over the heads to counteract the cool balance of the scene. It was a stunning professional image that could run on the cover of any national magazine—and I was just as proud as the guy who shot it!"

"Good photography transcends all categories—whether it's portraits, landscapes or sports. If it's good, it's based on the same principles."

REED HOFFMANN

"My greatest satisfaction is watching people grow and seeing how much better their photography is after they've been on a few treks."

© IMAGES BY REED HOFFMANN

A full-time pro since 1979, Reed worked on newspapers until he went digital with the D1 in 2000—he now uses a D200, 17-55mm f/2.8 and 70-200mm f/2.8 Nikkor lenses and an SB-800 Speedlight. As a freelancer he helped many publications make the digital conversion, and as a **Nikon** School of Photography instructor he's run educational programs in 28 cities. "Digital makes it much easer to progress rapidly because you can shoot and evaluate more pictures in less time," he notes. "That's why I encourage my students to take 8 to 10 shots instead of one, to use different lenses, and to add that defining element that makes a great shot. Everyone needs a mentor—someone who cares enough to give you extra time and attention. My reward is watching people look proudly at their pictures at the end of the trip—pictures they never could have executed as well at the beginning. In heading up tours of Croatia, India, Sweden, Montana, and Tucson I've given people new ideas and enhanced their perceptions. It's hard work, but I know I pack as much photography and learning as possible into whatever time you've got."

TOM BOL

"Everyone is there because they love photography—that's why there's great camaraderie, lots of learning going on, and a heck of a lot of fun."

Tom Bol is an avid outdoorsman specializing in outdoor adventure and sports photography as well as "outdoorsy travel and editorial shooting" for publications like *National Geographic Adventure*. A pro for 12 years, he's also been featured in *Nikon World* magazine. Not surprisingly, Tom uses a D2x, a D200, and an arsenal of Nikkor lenses ranging from a 10.5mm fisheye to 70-200mm f/2.8 and 300mm f/2.8 telephoto lenses. "For flash, I live and breathe SB-800s," he notes. "One of the great things about the Mentor Series is showing people stuff they don't know, and watching them make leaps and bounds in their photography. A great example was photographing a crypt in the Czech Republic, and helping my student break out the SB-800s and set up multiple wireless lighting with warming gels to shoot the skulls and skeletons. A flash clinic in a bone yard is kind of bizarre, but they were psyched and the results were outstanding. I've only been mentoring for two years, but I've covered St. Vincent, Prague & Budapest, Maui, and Arches National Park in Utah. Yes, I can tell you great stories about each event!"

© IMAGES BY TOM BOL

© IMAGES BY ROSANNE PENNELLA

ROSANNE PENNELLA

"The two great passions I have in life are photography and travel."

Rosanne Pennella was a successful corporate lawyer, but she never felt happy or fulfilled until she pursued her true love—travel photography. "Being a Mentor feeds my soul because I can see myself in my students," says Rosanne, who now specializes in international tourism and editorial images for magazines and brochures. "I pride myself on my approachable teaching style—just find me on the bus. One trekker did, and after perusing 200 of his images I noticed he centered almost every one horizontally. So I explained the compositional rule thirds and gave him a simple directive 'You can't center anything for the rest of this trip—OK?' His pictures improved dramatically, and he later e-mailed me exultantly—'I won a contest!' I also teach people how to approach strangers and to mimic body postures to get people to pose even if you can't speak the language." Rosanne, who has led tours to Morocco, Thailand, Egypt, and Peru relies on a D2x and a D200 with 12-24mm f/4, 17-55mm f/2.8 and 70-200mm f/2.8 Nikkor lenses. "Being a mentor keeps me fresh—it's inspiring to work with people as turned on by life and travel as I am. I do this because I love it!"

Nikon
At the heart of the image.

ROB VAN PETTEN

© IMAGES BY ROB VAN PETTEN

"I love photography and that's why I'm here—to help you to take better pictures."

A specialist in advertising fashion photography for 35 years, Rob began using cameras at the tender age of 10! Indeed, he still uses a few of his '60s Nikkors to complement the 17-35mm f/2.8 and 28-70mm f/2.8 lenses he favors on his D2x, "the camera that made me a happy digital photographer." Van Petten awes trekkers by first showing them highly manipulated fashion images, then displays his personal shots to prove he a genuine enthusiast. A veteran mentor, he's lead treks to places as exotic as Maui and the Cayman Islands and as mainstream as Chicago. "Mentoring is very gratifying because it allows me to give something back to people who are as passionate about photography as I am," says Rob. "It's a great way for me to connect directly to the raw passion of people who are not pros and to help them to articulate their vision more effectively. Sometimes the best experiences are unplanned, like when we shot close-ups of stingrays in the morning until the rains came, then had a great class on digital workflow in the hotel conference room."

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PORTFOLIO

© MICHAL CHELBIN

"Natasha, Ukraine, 2005," by Michal Chelbin.

A STUDY IN THREE PARTS

THE NEW PORTRAIT

THE ART OF PORTRAITURE MAY BE MORE RICHLY CREATIVE—AND MORE NEEDED—THAN EVER BEFORE. **ESSAY BY DAVID SCHONAUER**

FACES IN THE CROWD

It's always been much easier for me to understand why photographers want to take pictures of people than why people want to have their pictures taken. For most of us, even the famous, it can be profoundly discomfiting to forfeit our power of self-deception, to put ourselves into the hands of a portraitist who has his or her own agenda. Richard Avedon once recalled that Henry Kissinger, a man used to authority as Richard Nixon's secretary of state, pleaded with him to "be kind to me" when he sat for a portrait. A master of realpolitik, Kissinger recognized an imbalance of power when he saw it.

The portrait in art comes with social, cultural, and psychological underpinnings that are complex and endlessly fascinating to contemplate. As a species, we have learned to understand others by reading their faces; it is one of the ways we bind ourselves together and protect ourselves from danger. In that regard, our interest in faces can be seen simply as an evolutionary fact.

The invention of photography changed that fact in astounding ways. It allowed us to see our own faces over the course of time. In an interview several years ago, the late Susan Sontag noted that "never before in human history did people have any idea of what they looked like as children. The rich commissioned [paintings] of their children, but the conventions of portraiture from the Renaissance through the 19th century were thoroughly determined by ideas about class and didn't give people a very reliable idea of what they had looked like."

The portrait, formal and otherwise, has been a staple of photography since the daguerreotype made it cheap and relatively easy to capture someone's likeness. The 19th-century French writer Charles Baudelaire lamented that the burgeoning photographic industry had become "the refuge of failed painters with too little talent." Photo historian Naomi Rosenblum explains that the daguerreotype portrait struck a particular chord in America. "In the conjunction of uncanny detail, artless yet intense expression, and naïve pose, Americans recognized a mirror of the national ethos that esteemed unvarnished truth and distrusted elegance and ostentation," she writes.

At later times during the history of photography, the portrait has had to share center stage with other genres, particularly throughout the last decades of the 20th century. But there is ample evidence that the interest in portraiture among photographers is stronger now than ever before. Several new books have focused on the portrait, none with as much clarity as *Face: The New Photographic Portrait* (Thames & Hudson, $50). Its author, William A. Ewing, the director of the Musée de l'Elysée in Lausanne, Switzerland, notes that at the end of the 20th century it was not the face but the body that seemed to hold photography in thrall. "Bodies were beginning to be seriously reconfigured and reconstituted by scientists and engineers," he writes. "Imagemakers felt the need to keep pace." Body photography tended to avoid faces, which, as Ewing notes, "were distracting, too personal—too sight-specific, as it were. Body photographers sought to make statements about the universal human condition, and showing faces inevitably subverted this goal." Today, in an era of what Ewing calls growing global uniformity, we may again be looking for the very specifics the face supplies. In a time of terrorism and war, we may be searching with keener interest for the human connections and clues to character that we have learned to discern from the face.

HENDRIK KERSTENS

The portfolio on the following pages features new work from both established masters of the form and from a new generation of photographers, all of whom are using the portrait to ask questions about the modern world and to describe the faces of our time.

Any discussion about the modern portrait must begin with Annie Leibovitz, the best-known portraitist of our time. In her new book, *A Photographer's Life: 1990-2005*

(Random House, $75), she focuses not only on modern celebrity—the very media royalty she helped create throughout her career—but also on her own life and loved ones. Another famed portraitist, Albert Watson, has recently completed a project on Las Vegas, constructing a series of landscapes, portraits, and still lifes that take as their subjects an array of visually enticing characters that could only come from this particular American city. *New York Times* photojournalist James Hill contemplates the use of portraiture as historical evidence, as does documentary photographer Lori Grinker. Dutch photographer Hendrik Kerstens turns his daughter Paula into a work of art by re-creating the indelible lighting of master painters. Photographer Mark Laita shows work from his recent book, *Created Equal,* a clever collection of black-and-white portraits pairing subjects that are, at least on first thought, incongruous. Throughout this portfolio, in fact, the nature of celebrity is redefined. Photographer Todd Eberle, who shoots for magazines like *Vanity Fair,* offers his take on artist Robert Rauschenberg. Michal Chelbin, a relatively new name in fine-art circles, creates masterly color portraits of little-known circus performers in Ukraine. Portraitist Nigel Parry turns movie stars and other celebrities into icons by seeing past the glitter of fame. Meanwhile, for famed Hollywood photographer Matthew Rolston, the artifice of the portrait is redeemed by its celebration of beauty.

Behind all this work lies a simple question that has yet to be answered: What is it that a portrait can actually reveal? In another new book on portraiture, *Face of Fashion* (Aperture, $60), author and curator Susan Bright notes that portraitists are necessarily concerned "with surfaces and effects. [They] ask vexing questions about commercial image-making, iconic status, [and] identity."

Renaissance painters and generations of artists held that the finest portraits show not just an outward likeness but the subject's character as well. That is a tall artistic order, never more so than in our modern world, filled as it is with imagery (and people) that we no longer completely believe in, where beautiful faces stare out from every magazine cover in every corner of the globe and invite instant idolatry. Avedon knew it when he famously concluded, as William Ewing points out, that a portrait wasn't "a fact" but "only an opinion," and that for a portraitist, "The surface is all you've got."

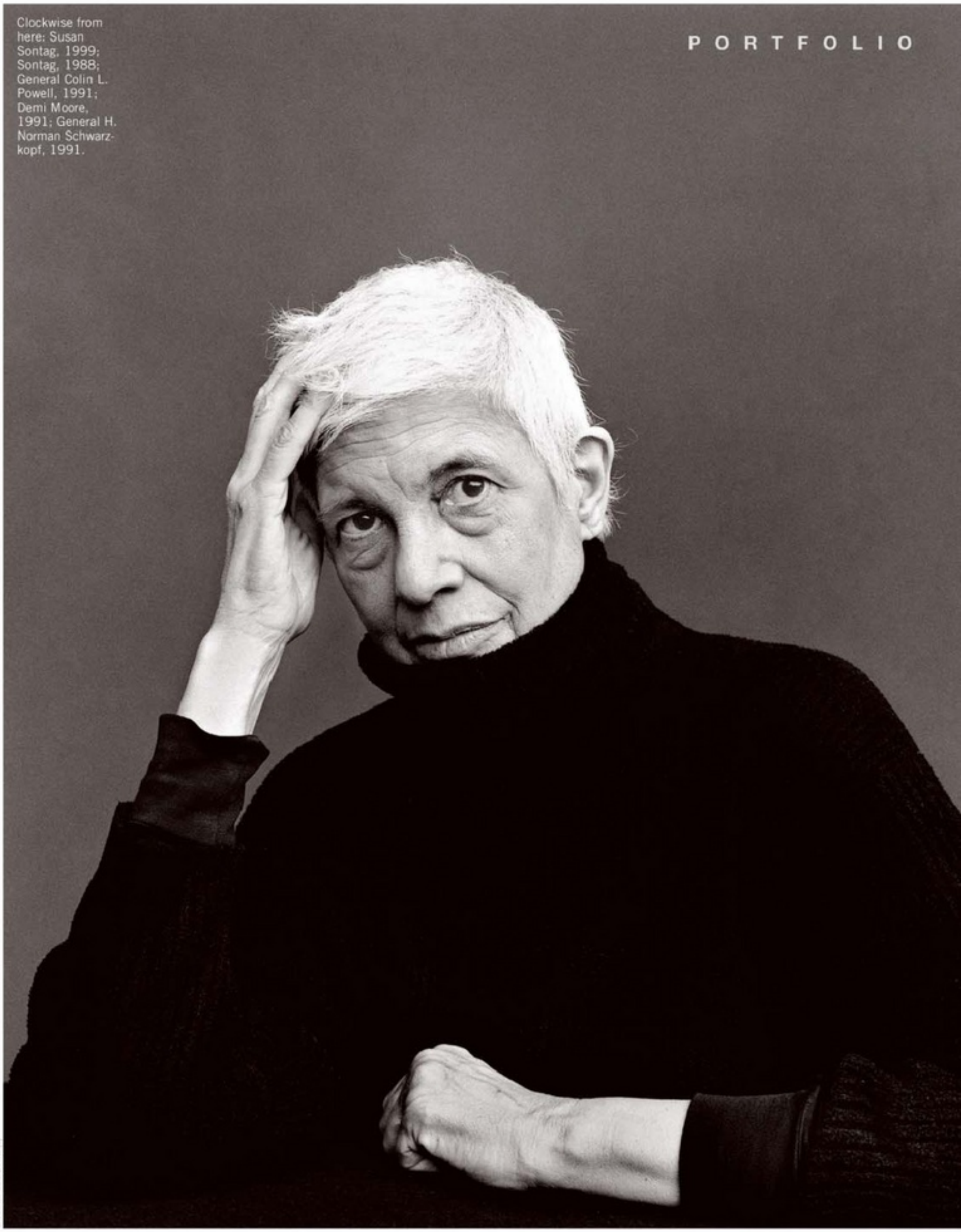
And yet the portrait beguiles us, tempts us to draw conclusions about the "inner character" of the subject. In yet another new book, *Lincoln's Smile and Other Enigmas* (Hill and Wang, $27), historian Alan Trachtenberg says our modern culture's distrust of "depths, interiors, [and] hidden truths" renders the photographed face "as opaque and possibly devious, a collaborative construction between artist, sitter, and viewer." He wonders whether "something important has been lost in the recent abandonment in the belief of face as text."

By way of conclusion, Trachtenberg quotes the 19th-century Boston daguerreotypist Albert Sands Southworth, who said that the gift of the portraitist is like "another sense." Southworth believed it was indeed possible to portray a face as not just a likeness but a revelation. What the portraitist needs, said Southworth, is a "genius" for close observation, as well as a "discipline of mind and vision." Now more than ever. ■

© JAMES HILL

ALBERT WATSON

This spread, from left: Portraits by Hendrik Kerstens, James Hill, and Albert Watson.



Clockwise from here: Susan Sontag, 1999; Sontag, 1988; General Colin L. Powell, 1991; Demi Moore, 1991; General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, 1991.

© ANNIE LEIBOVITZ (5)

THE ICONOGRAPHIC PORTRAIT

ANNIE LEIBOVITZ

Long recognized as the gold standard for celebrity portraiture, Annie Leibovitz is equally well known for refusing to sacrifice her private life on the altar of public celebrity. But in Leibovitz's most recent retrospective, *A Photographer's Life: 1990-2005*, we are finally allowed to glimpse the sanctum sanctorum. At age 57, Leibovitz is working to reinvent herself by sharing her reportage work and intimate snapshots of her family and her partner, the writer Susan Sontag, who died in 2004.

In her introduction to the book, Leibovitz explains that she initially compiled many of the more personal photographs while putting together a book for Sontag's memorial service. Sontag's death, following complications from leukemia, was followed six weeks later by the death of Leibovitz's father. Thus it is no wonder that what Leibovitz refers to as "themes of death and grief" permeate the book.

"I don't have two lives," Leibovitz writes. "This is one life, and the personal pictures and the assignment work are all part of it." *A Photographer's Life* mirrors this sentiment with its organization, which is more or less chronological, mixing private moments with Leibovitz's signature high-profile portraits. A similar effect is achieved by the accompanying exhibition, which was first shown at the Brooklyn Museum and will be on view at the San Diego Museum of Art through April 22.

Ultimately, the images of Sontag herself are the greatest proof of the iconographic power of Leibovitz's portraiture. "I edited this book with her in mind," Leibovitz writes. "As if she were standing behind me, saying what she would like to see in it." —MIKI JOHNSON

JAMES HILL

© JAMES HILL (2)

As a photojournalist, James Hill's credentials are as solid as they come. His coverage of the 2003 American invasion of Iraq helped the *New York Times* win a Pulitzer Prize, and he continues to roam the globe for both the newspaper and *Time* magazine. "I certainly don't consider myself a great portraitist," he says. "In fact, when I went into photojournalism, I really felt that I was turning away from portraiture, which was odd, because my photographic heroes were Irving Penn and August Sander."

He has since reexamined his ideas about the relationship between photojournalism and portraiture. "They are not necessarily exclusive pedigrees," he says. Last June, Hill, who is based in Moscow, decided to record the yearly celebration of what is known in Russia as Victory Day—the day set aside to mark the end of World War II. But instead of heading out with his digital SLR, he packed his Hasselblad with a single 80mm f/2.8 lens and a white sheet to use as a backdrop and and went to Gorky Park, where many veterans of the war gather to have lunch with old Red Army comrades. Among these veterans are many women who served as nurses and administrators, but also combat soldiers, and even snipers. "I wanted to record their faces," says Hill, "because this generation is disappearing, year by year."

In that sense, his portraits can be seen as historical documents. The faces in these spare images tell a thousand stories. —JEFFREY ELBIES

Veterans of the Red Army, in Gorky Park in 2006.

"Nancy Alvarez, Las Vegas, 2000."

ALBERT WATSON

THE CHARISMATIC PORTRAIT

ALBERT WATSON (2)

Known as one of contemporary photography's great portraitists, Albert Watson nonetheless struggles when he attempts to describe what, exactly, a portrait is. "My definition is a broad one," he says in his rolling Scottish accent. "But for me it has to go beyond reportage. A portrait implies a studied approach, a real setup. It comes from the way painters once approached their subjects."

The images here are vibrant examples of just such an approach. Watson took them one night in a casino in Las Vegas, where he was working on a self-assigned project. "As a European, Las Vegas simply dazzles me," he says. "I actually have a very positive view of the place, because it delivers exactly what it says it will. It's an entire city built on the idea of service." Watson spent six months shooting everything from desert landscapes to neon signs to car wrecking lots, but above all the people who are drawn to Vegas. "I was searching for charisma—people with some intensity, with some characteristic that made them eccentric," he says.

He found this young woman while riding in a hotel elevator, noticing first her ruby red Chinese shoes. "By the time we got to the top floor, I'd asked her if she wanted to pose. She was with her boyfriend, so that helped—she wasn't scared of me." Watson had set up a makeshift studio in one of the casino's unused kitchens, with four different backdrops. He shot her in front of a red seamless with a Horseman 4x5 camera and 300mm lens.—J.E.

MICHAL CHELBIN

THE HIGH-CONTRAST PORTRAIT

Here: "Two Matadors, Ukraine, 2005." Opposite: "Young Cadets, Russia, 2004."

© MICHAL CHELBIN (2)

Like a talented painter, Michal Chelbin creates portraits that eloquently speak a language of contrasts—between shadow and highlight, as well as the dark and light sides of life.

For her recent *Strangely Familiar* series, which chronicles Eastern European circus performers, Chelbin says she "tried to focus on the real person and not the mask." This tension between what we expect from her subjects and how they actually appear—usually with a disarming, dissatisfied stare—has prompted frequent comparisons to the work of Diane Arbus.

Chelbin, who was born and raised in Israel but now lives in New York City, began photographing Russian immigrants in Israel's big circus shows six years ago. As the project progressed, she traveled to Russia and Ukraine, photographing smaller shows in rural towns. A few years into the project, Chelbin also moved into the realm of color, sometimes re-creating pictures she'd taken previously in black and white.

"I am always fascinated to see the contrast between vivid costumes with gray surroundings," she explains. In one image, a young girl, dressed in a hot-pink leotard and tutu, stands demurely in front of four coal miners desaturated by soot.

In fact, many of Chelbin's muses are preteen girls and boys, often costumed prematurely in the raiment of adulthood. "I like to focus on this age between innocent and experienced," she says.

This liminality draws the viewer into Chelbin's portraits. And it helps explain the attention her work has garnered, including three honors from the National Portrait Gallery's Schweppes Photographic Portrait Prize and an Aperture book on *Strangely Familiar* planned for 2008. —M.J.

© TODD EBERLE

Eberle's photograph of Robert Rauschenberg, for *Vanity Fair*.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PORTRAIT

TODD EBERLE

Having started his career doing fine-art and architectural photography, Todd Eberle brings an atmospheric sensibility to his portraits for *Vanity Fair, The New Yorker,* and other magazines. "I approach everything similarly," says the New York–based Eberle, "but it's different with a portrait because you're putting a person in it, and you want to respect their space and not distract from them. So I try to flesh out the environment with just as much information as necessary."

Eberle adds that portrait sessions often entail unplanned factors, such as a celebrity's limited time—or patience. "I can be very studied," he says, "but at a certain point I have to just go. It may be a challenging situation, but you have to think on your feet and make it work."

A case in point: Eberle's portrait of famed artist Robert Rauschenberg (left), shot for a *Vanity Fair* story announcing a show at New York City's Metropolitan Museum of Art. Eberle showed up at the artist's home in Captiva, Florida, within hours of Hurricane Charley in August 2004; Rauschenberg was, Eberle says, "kind of fragile," having suffered a stroke a few months earlier. "The picture came in the pressure of the moment," Eberle says. "I put him next to one of his works, and I thought of the mirror as kind of a metaphor." Pressed for time, Eberle placed a softbox under the tripod on which his Linhof 4x5 view camera was mounted. "The lighting came out a little bit ghostly," he says. But Rauschenberg's spirit of survival is what comes through. —JACK CRAGER

Rolston's shot of Nicholson (here) and his diptych of Hayek (opposite).

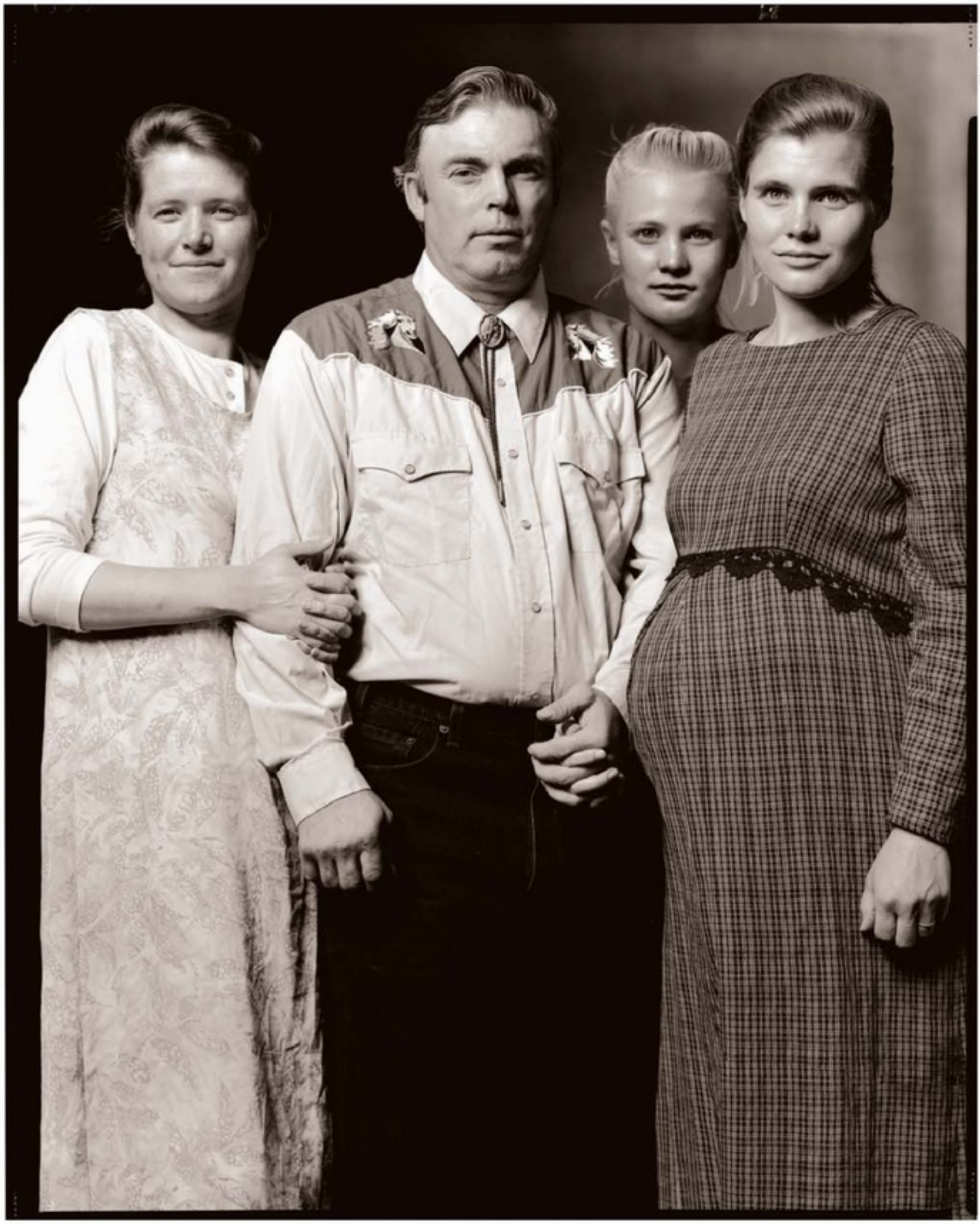
One of the foremost names in contemporary photography, Matthew Rolston considers portraiture a creative act in which he is both performer and audience. "A portrait is a picture of someone who is allowing his or her picture to be taken," he notes. The act of portraiture is, then, completely collaborative in nature. That's especially true when working with image-conscious stars like Salma Hayek (below) and Jack Nicholson, whom Rolston shot for a recent article in *Rolling Stone* (opposite). The article coincided with the opening of Nicholson's 2006 movie, *The Departed,* in which he plays a fairly blood-thirsty character. "I had some ideas for the picture, but when we spoke with Jack about *his* ideas, he kept talking about how this character just enjoys killing people," says Rolston. "So we came up with an idea together. He even knew what color and type of stage blood he wanted to use in the photograph."

The act of creating a picture also requires Rolston to become an audience to whatever talent is in front of his camera. "I hold that moment precious," he says. "Here is this famous person, and it's as if they're giving me a private performance. And that moment is ephemeral. It's there and it's gone." —J.E.

© MATTHEW ROLSTON (3)

THE ART OF COLLABORATION

MATTHEW ROLSTON



© MARK LAITA (2)

Left and opposite, a Mark Laita diptych: "Polygamists, Salt Lake City, Utah, October 1, 2004/Pimp, Detroit, Michigan, January 9, 2003."

THE PORTRAIT IN DOUBLE VISION

MARK LAITA

When Mark Laita embarked on a photographic journey to explore the social diversity of America, he did not envision a collection of diptychs. But that's exactly what he ended up with in *Created Equal,* his portrait series recently featured in a show at the Fahey/Klein Gallery in Los Angeles and in its accompanying catalog of the same name (Fahey/Klein Gallery, $20).

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"I started out taking individual portraits," Laita says, "but at some point I realized, 'These two are really great combined.' And later I shot several pictures that were composed to go together." The resulting series contains striking juxtapositions—a ballerina and a boxer, Amish teenagers and punk teenagers, bikers and altar boys—underpinned by a common humanity. A Los Angeles–based commercial photographer, Laita shot all his subjects in black and white, against seamless, with an 8x10 Gowlandflex twin-lens reflex camera, lending uniformity to varied characters. "With this setup, there are no scenic distractions," he says. "It makes it about the person. My intent is to remind us we are all equal. I'm not judging anyone; I'm just showing them the way they are."—J.C.

Clockwise from far left: "Wet," 2002; "Pimp Up Towel," 2006; "Sunburn," 2001.

HENDRIK KERSTENS (2)

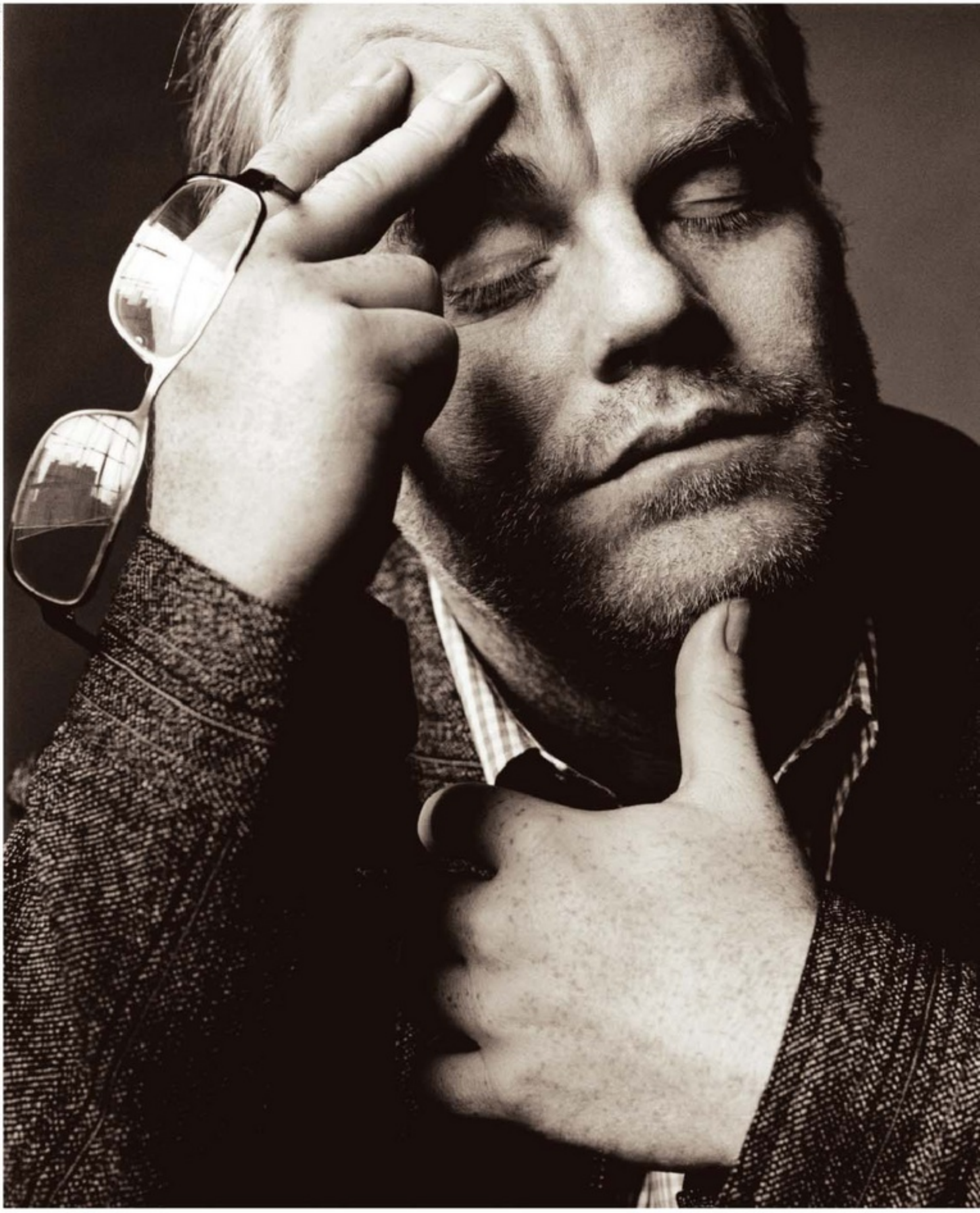
THE PORTRAIT AS MASTERPIECE

HENDRIK KERSTENS

It was unusual for Hendrik Kerstens to want to document the life of his daughter, Paula. As he notes on his Website (*hendrikkerstens.com*), he simply wanted "to be there" to capture "the fleeting moments that fade from memory all too quickly." What is unusual is the way this Amsterdam-based fine-art photographer goes about that task: by evoking the paintings of Dutch master painters, especially Johannes Vermeer. "It's a way for me to shake up the concept of time," he says. "I'm taking someone today with modern tastes and portraying her in the style of 17th-century artists." In doing so, Kerstens literally immortalizes his daughter, "as if to stop time and oblivion."

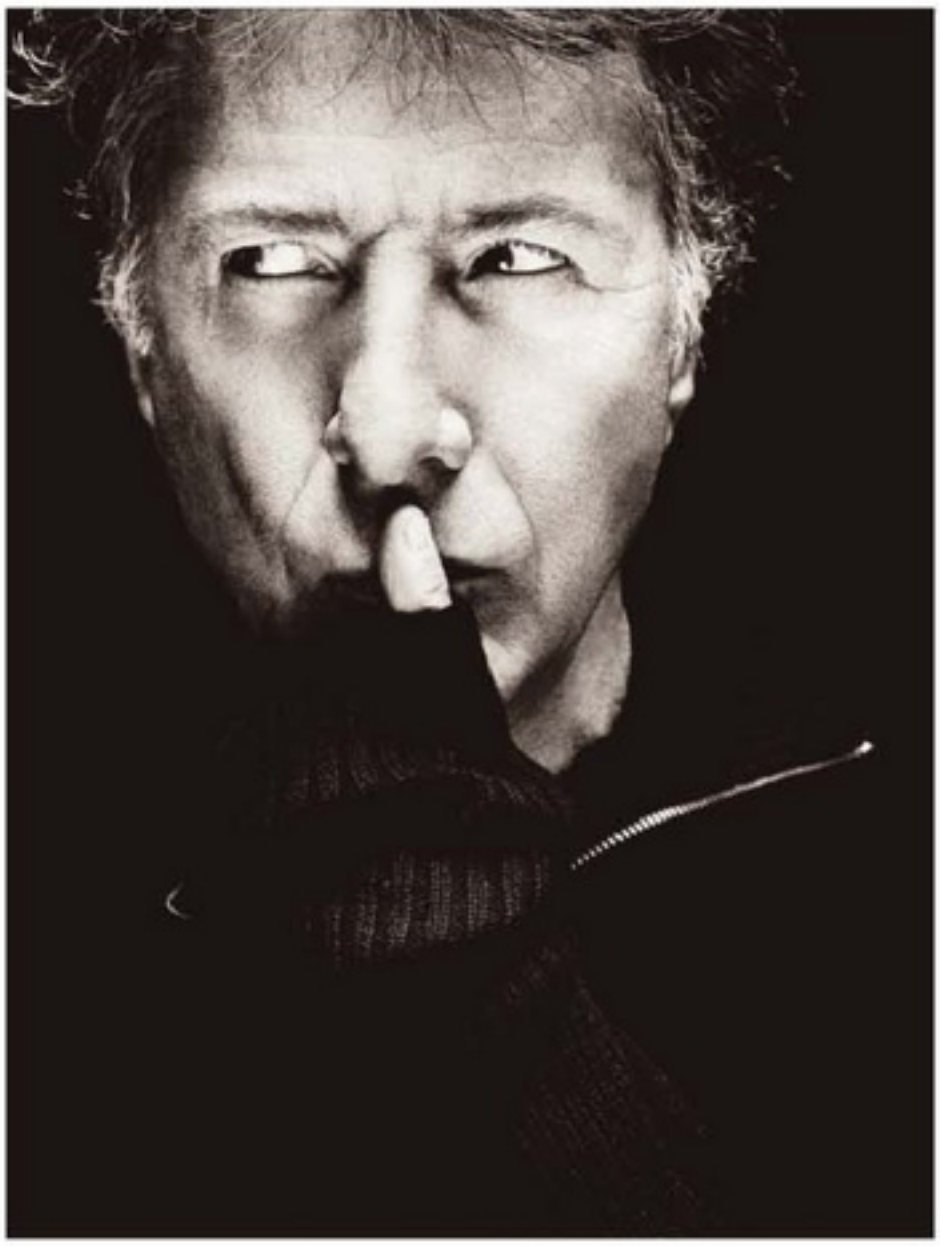
The project came about one day after Paula had returned from horseback riding. "When she took off her hat, I saw that her hair was held together by a hair net, and it reminded me of the portraits of the Dutch masters," Kerstens says. What fascinated him about those paintings, he says, "is the way [they can be] seen as a surface which can be read as a description of everyday life, as opposed to the paintings of the Italian Renaissance, which usually tell a story. Northern European painting relies much more on craftsmanship and the perfect rendition of the subject. The use of light is instrumental in this." Kerstens himself crafts his portraits with a Toyo 8x10 view camera.

So far Kersten's work has been seen mostly in Europe, but it was to be exhibited at the Scope New York art fair from February 23–26. —J.E.



© NIGEL PARRY (3)

Parry's portraits (clockwise from here): Philip Seymour Hoffman; Dustin Hoffman; 9/11 widow Lisa Beamer and family.



THE UNEXPECTED VIEW

NIGEL PARRY

British-born portraitist Nigel Parry is a master at getting celebrities to do unusual things for photographic effect. How does he put them at ease? "I have no idea," he answers with a laugh. "But if people see you are serious and genuine about what you are doing, they respect that and cooperate. I try to make the shoot painless. They're letting me use their most precious possession—their face—to comment on."

Parry, whose recent celebrity portraits are gathered in the new monograph *Blunt* (powerHouse, $60), says he usually plans out a picture before his subject arrives, often with an assistant sitting in. "Sometimes the person is secondary—they become an element, rather than the center of attention," he says. "I like to withdraw and say, 'If this wasn't a famous person—if it was Joe Blow—would it be a good photo?' At times I go in with a blank slate. But I'll have a set of things I want to do—and when I have that group of ideas, it allows me to do absolutely anything."

Shooting Philip Seymour Hoffman (far left), who won an Oscar in 2006 for his portrayal of Truman Capote, Parry decided to reinterpret Irving Penn's 1965 portrait of the real Capote. "I was ready with available light, I had marked the placement of the chair, and after he sat down I positioned the hands the way I wanted them. I don't think he knew what I was up to."

Parry's work in *Blunt* was shot with a Hasselblad 503CX on black-and-white film. "I don't like to show Polaroids to the subjects," he says. He prefers to let them wait until the portrait is selected and printed. "They're not *always* thrilled," he adds, "but more often than not, they end up buying prints." —J.C.

© LORI GRINKER

Vietnam veteran Tim Lee at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

When Lori Grinker began the project that became her book *Afterwar,* she wasn't thinking about making portraits; she was thinking about telling stories. After documenting the troubled relations between Israelis and Palestinians in the 1980s, Grinker was determined to show the common threads that bind veterans of war. "I got this feeling [veterans] are on a different plane than the rest of us," she explains. *Afterwar* is the culmination of 15 years of work and includes more than 70 photos of veterans of 23 wars, arranged in reverse chronological order with summaries of the conflicts and poignant interviews with the subjects.

The photographs, which hover somewhere between photojournalism and environmental portraiture, have appeared in more than a dozen shows, including the *Moving Walls* project, which took them most recently to Amman.

"It's like a portrait of their experience," Grinker muses. "I'm not just photographing them to show a wound, but to express how they live with that wound."

At first, Grinker's idea was to create a self-contained essay on each veteran. She later found, however, that she could more powerfully capture each person's struggle with a single image. Her portraits convey survival stories while also situating each one within a larger history of war. Grinker terms this type of photography "photojournalistic portraiture." Now that she is comfortable creating portraits, she finds herself employing them more often, as in her two upcoming projects about the Grinker family's migration from Europe and professional healers. —M.J.

THE PHOTOJOURNALISTIC PORTRAIT

LORI GRINKER

© ANNIE LEIBOVITZ/FROM A PHOTOGRAPHER'S LIFE, 1990-2005

THE TECHNIQUE AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE PORTRAITIST, REVEALED.

PORTRAITURE: A MASTER CLASS

Annie Leibovitz

"I'm not a great studio portraitist. At best, my studio photographs are graphic. I can always fall back on composition. When you have a subject who projects himself well, an actor or some other kind of entertainer, you can get an interesting picture, but I don't like trying to make something happen in the studio. It feels cheap to me. On the other hand, when you strip everything away, it's terrifying. It's just you and another person.

"I started doing studio portraits in the '80s, when I had a large working space on Vandam Street. I did a lot of the work for the first Gap portrait campaign there. The pictures of Brice Marden and Tony Kushner come from that work. Then I moved to an even larger studio on 26th Street, but the productions got so big that I felt that the situation was out of control. It's one of the reasons I sold the 26th Street building.

"There are truly intelligent photographers who work in the studio, but it's not for me. Richard Avedon's genius was that he was a great communicator. He pulled things out of his subjects. But I observe. Avedon knew how to talk to people. What to talk to them about. As soon as you engage someone, their face changes. They become animated. They forget about being photographed. Their minds become occupied and they look more interesting. But I'm so busy looking, I can't talk. I never developed that gift. I have the same problem with my children. I know I have to be more involved, to interact more, but I love just looking at them.

"My pictures are helped by an environment. I love the street. I love going to someone's house, seeing what's on their walls, what chair they sit in. I like to see how they live. When I shot Bill Gates at his home in Bellevue, Washington, every time we set up lights between shots he would disappear and I'd find him sitting at his computer. It was all he did. This was before computers were omnipresent. I was bewildered, and I thought that I would never want to have one. Then I realized that was the picture."

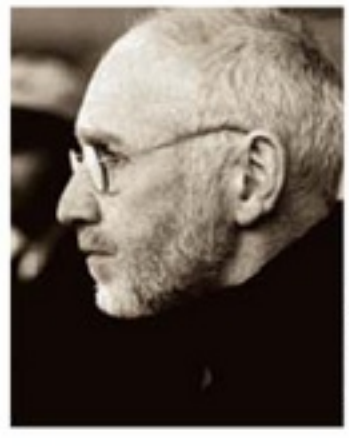
JAMES HILL

James Hill

"I think for every photographer, there is always this feeling that at every moment you're looking and wondering whether you should be taking a picture. You might be driving down the road, when you see something and wonder whether you should stop the car and shoot. And invariably if you don't, you end up regretting it later. That's the way it is for me as a photojournalist, at least, and to an extent I think the same goes for taking portraits. You're always looking at faces and wondering.

"That's primarily how I came to take the portraits of the Russian World War II veterans. During the war there were one million women serving in the Red Army. Now, 61 years after the war, those women are simply disappearing. So I felt this need to freeze this moment in time. For me, a portrait does that, no matter what else it might do. I think when I made these pictures I really began to understand the portrait, that it's not just a person you're shooting, but a moment. I shot them on Agfa APX 100 black-and-white film. The exposure was 1/125 second at f/5.6.

"I think that newspapers are opening themselves up to more portraiture and other kinds of photography. Especially in online editions of newspapers, including the *New York Times*, there's a broader notion of what photographers can do and how they can capture what's happening in the world. I recently did a story on the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster for the *Times*'s online edition, and it was all portraits."



TAKESHI HANZAWA

Albert Watson

"Whoever I'm shooting, whether it's Bill Gates or Bill Clinton or a Las Vegas dominatrix or a prison convict or a young mother in Morocco, I give them the same attention, the same focus. I'm not really out there trying to capture fame or celebrity. I'm trying to capture a person's charisma. I'm looking for something special about their facial geometry. Sometimes you find someone with absolutely zero charisma, and that can be startling and interesting too, because it's actually very uncommon to find someone with zero charisma. Interestingly, when I do find someone like that, they're often from the Midwest. You find people by keeping your eyes open, really. I was on the prowl in Las Vegas all the time. I was always scanning rooms, changing my own visual perspective, looking up, looking down, moving around, to see people from different angles. Sometimes I'd hang out in front of a ladies' room to see women come out individually, just for that change in perspective. It sounds a little strange, but it was effective.

"For the Las Vegas portraits, I was working with three assistants and four prearranged sets built in an unused kitchen in a casino. That was expensive—I was paying for everything myself. But it was very efficient. I started the project after completing a really classic black-and-white project on Morocco. So I wanted

the Las Vegas project to be very different—color, more impressionistic. And that sort of dictated how I did the portraits.

"I was shooting mostly with a 4x5 camera, and occasionally my Hasselblad. I'm a bit old school, and I believe in film for this sort of work. Working with a 4x5 and a digital back has a delay. And with portraiture you need absolute control; you need to capture the moment you want. You can't have the subject look at you with an expression that says, 'Are you ready yet?' That's deadly.

"Getting the picture right has to do with much more than just where I put the lights. I'm known for a kind of technical expertise, but I'm not really a techy person. I worked early in my career to learn as much about light as possible so that I can go into a portrait session with someone and not spend my time fussing over it. It's really about establishing a connection between me and my subject. A portrait is very emotional in this way."

Todd Eberle

FRANCESCA VON HABSBURG

"A successful portrait comes from having interest in and knowledge about a subject's achievements, things that make them unique, and using that information to illustrate something about them and 'tell a story' in a photograph. I've often photographed people repeatedly over time, which I think is unusual: Rem Koolhaas, Frank Gehry, Jeff Koons, and my friend Yvonne Force, of whom I've made thousands of pictures. I also take a lot of 'snapshots' of the art world, which is a collection that's accumulating into an abstracted, kind of *echt-portrait* of that world. You have to care about the people you are photographing and take the trouble to know them. The best portraits result from the intimacy and trust that you gain with them during the first photo session, and then over time."

CHRISTOPHER MCALLEN

Matthew Rolston

"I usually work in medium format, with a Mamiya RZ67, and often I work in large format, with a 4x5 and also a big 8x10 camera. Yes, it's harder to work that way; it's more cumbersome. But there is something wonderful about what happens when you make portraits in 8x10. You get something … I guess I would describe it as more soulful. In terms of working with the big camera, it takes a lot of skill to make that big box disappear. What I mean is, to get the subject to forget that there's this big thing in front of him or her.

"Whenever I start the process of photographing someone, I am always thinking, 'What is it I can identify about them as creative individuals, and why now? What's special about this moment?'

"Does a portrait reveal what someone's inner self is like? Do you know what I believe? I believe that everyone wears a mask, and beneath that mask is another mask. So what a photographer can reveal are the various masks we all wear."

ODED PLOTNIZKI

Michal Chelbin

"I spent months with the people in my *Strangely Familiar* series. I like to spend time with people, to try to have intimacy with them. My photos are not like a documentary portrait; my interest is not social or topical. I want to think it's more personal. It was important that I spend time with my subjects in their houses, away from the circus. I also use sensitive film so I can shoot with ambient light, because flash makes people less comfortable.

"The circus performers didn't understand why I didn't focus on their technical skills or their acts, or why I would choose a particular person to photograph. They didn't understand why we chose one girl, because she wasn't the star of the group. But she has this amazing face; you look at her and you can tell yourself a story about her. I think sometimes it's easier to work with children because they don't have an awareness of how they are supposed to come out in a photograph, like which is their good side."

Mark Laita

ELLIE LAITA

"I am interested in individuals who wear their occupation, lifestyle, or region's burden on their faces and bodies. For a lot of these people, asking to photograph them is a strange request, and they are pretty wary. But I show them my photographs and let them know there are all different kinds of people included in the project.

"The personalities change, but not the background, because I always use a seamless and the same lighting setup. We've shot in oil fields at 4 A.M., car garages, mountainsides, whorehouses—always with the same effect. I use a custom-built twin-lens 8x10 twin-lens reflex camera, because it lets me shoot relatively quickly. With an ordinary view camera, the person gets stiff; with a viewfinder, I can shoot shoot shoot."

BAS VAN TOL

Hendrik Kerstens

"I shoot the portraits of my daughter Paula on 8x10, then I scan the film and work on the image in Photoshop. But a lot

(continued on page 84)

THE GREAT PORTRAITS

© MICHAEL PARKER

PHOTOGRAPHERS AND OTHER EXPERTS CHOOSE THEIR FAVORITES.

Antonin Kratochvil, photographer: "I really love **Nigel Parry's shot of neocon Richard Perle** [for *Vanity Fair*]. In Parry's portrait, Perle looks just like Nazi leader Joseph Goebbels did in the famous picture by Alfred Eisenstaedt."

Ralph Gibson, photographer: "Good portraitists come up with their look—their matrix—early on, within which the sitter is allowed to reveal himself. I love the portraits of Henri Cartier-Bresson because of their geometry, where he cast figures in a field of perfect perspective. I also enjoy Robert Frank's portraits for their existential qualities. Bill Brandt's have an incredible surreal overtone; it is said that his portraits capture the eternal aspect of a sitter. For overall consistency and quality, I would name Irving Penn. Of course the most famous portrait in the history of photography is Korda's shot of Che Guevara, but it's not my favorite. My favorite is **Alberto Giacometti by Cartier-Bresson,** where we can so clearly see that Giacometti looks like his sculptures."

Michael Wilson, photo collector and film producer: "It's almost impossible to choose my favorite, but a portrait I would mention is 'Mountain Nymph, Sweet Liberty,' by Julia Margaret Cameron. She was very innovative—the first one who made life-size heads. Hill and Adamson made wonderful portraits in Edinburgh in the 1840s. But the one that cannot be left off the list is the last image of **Abraham Lincoln, by Alexander Gardner,** who worked in Mathew Brady's studio. It's a very poignant image. The glass-plate negative is cracked, just like Lincoln's shattered life." *[The portrait is on the cover of* Lincoln's Smile and Other Enigmas *(Hill and Wang, $27).]*

John Loengard, photographer, writer, and former photography director at *Life* magazine: "Before the camera was invented, a portrait displayed a painter's ability to produce a likeness. Some painters had the dexterity to do this; others obviously didn't. Portraiture as a category of painting had real meaning then. With a camera, though, every passport photo is an exact likeness, so that in fact we judge a photographic portrait for its graphic style, the same way we judge other photographs. I've always liked Edward Weston's 1924 picture of Manuel Hernandez Galvan. It's a vivid picture, wonderfully organized in an unconventional manner. As far as my own work, **I photographed painter Georgia O'Keeffe** as she sat talking on the roof of her house at Ghost Ranch. The first frames caught her arms awkwardly as she gestured or focused on someone outside the picture. You wonder who it is. Finally, O'Keeffe seemed at rest, drawn into herself. Actually, her body is not relaxed. She's between query and response. She's coiled, ready to gesticulate." *[This image is in Loengard's new book,* Georgia O'Keeffe/John Loengard: Paintings And Photographs *(Schirmer/Mosel, $30).]*

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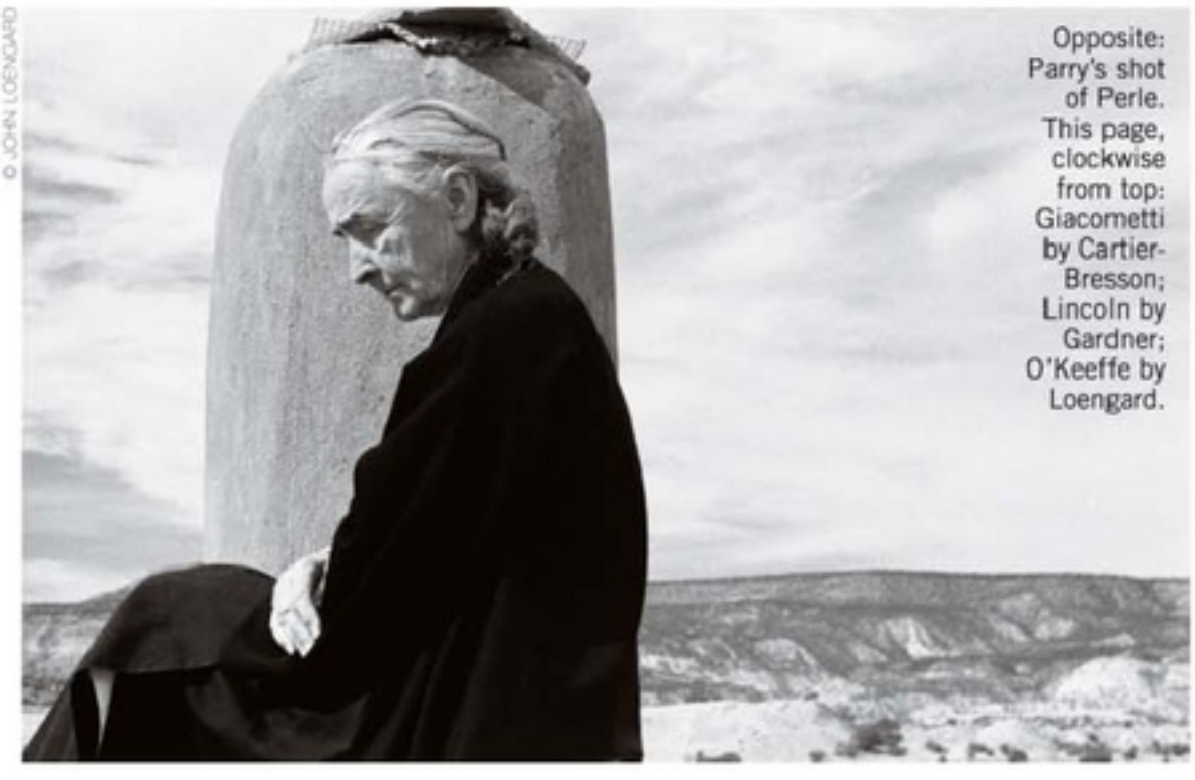
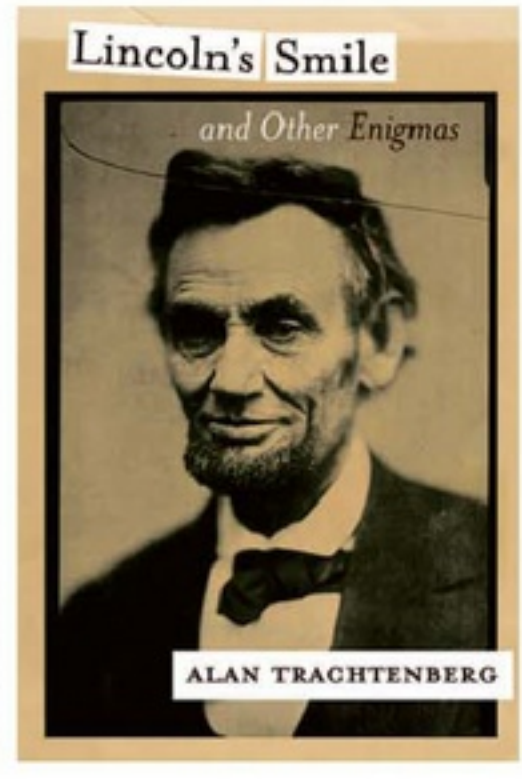


© JOHN LOENGARD

Opposite: Parry's shot of Perle. This page, clockwise from top: Giacometti by Cartier-Bresson; Lincoln by Gardner; O'Keeffe by Loengard.



© MARY ELLEN MARK/COURTESY FAHEY/KLEIN GALLERY, LOS ANGELES

David Fahey, co-owner of Fahey/Klein Gallery: "For me, the definition of a great portrait is an image that looks and feels authentic. Often, a successful portrait happens when there is a magical collaboration between the photographer and the subject. Sometimes the best collaboration is when the subject trusts the photographer

Clockwise: Fellini by Mark; Plachy's book cover; Sander's shot of a "Wife."

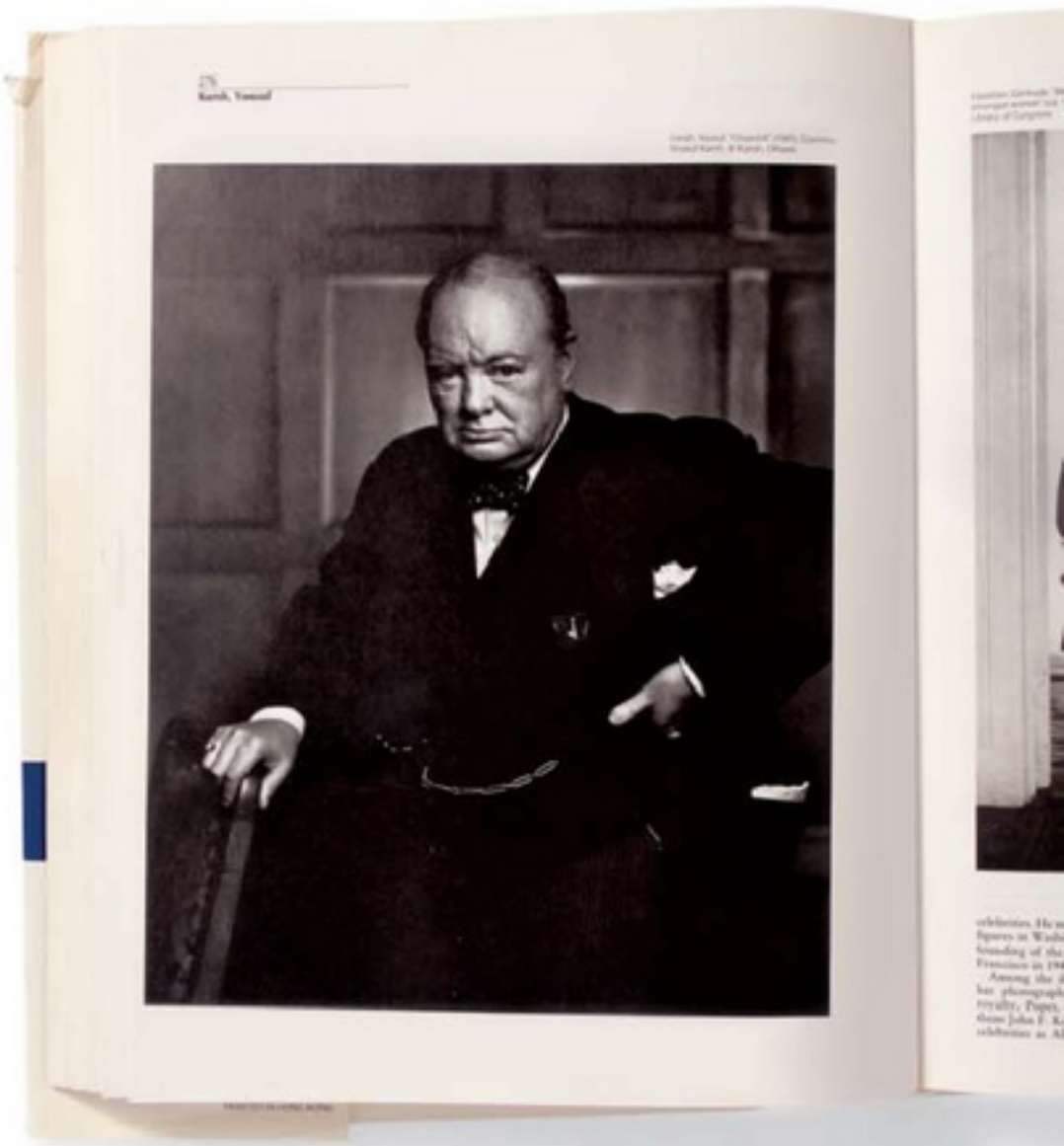
enough to give complete freedom. The photographer's goal is to create or find an atmosphere that enables the subject to reflect his or her true character. The clarity and honesty in the portrait can be revealed in the subject's gesture, eyes, or presence in front of the camera. The truth resides in the details the camera captures in that static moment. **Mary Ellen Mark's portrait of Federico Fellini** is special to me because it is a portrait that does not show a face but illustrates the personality of the subject. Her photograph shows us how he uses his entire body to communicate. Fellini is directing to an empty space but appears in command of his audience. His balletic gesture and graceful expression with a megaphone offer a glimpse of his nature as a director. The portrait projects just enough ambiguity to remain mysterious, inviting, and telling."

Albert Watson, photographer: "My favorite portrait is **August Sander's 'Wife of Cologne Painter Peter Abelen.'** It's a great portrait because it gives the essence of the person, but it's also spontaneous. It's quite unusual for a portrait to be spontaneous. It looks modern, too, and it was made in 1926! Fantastic."

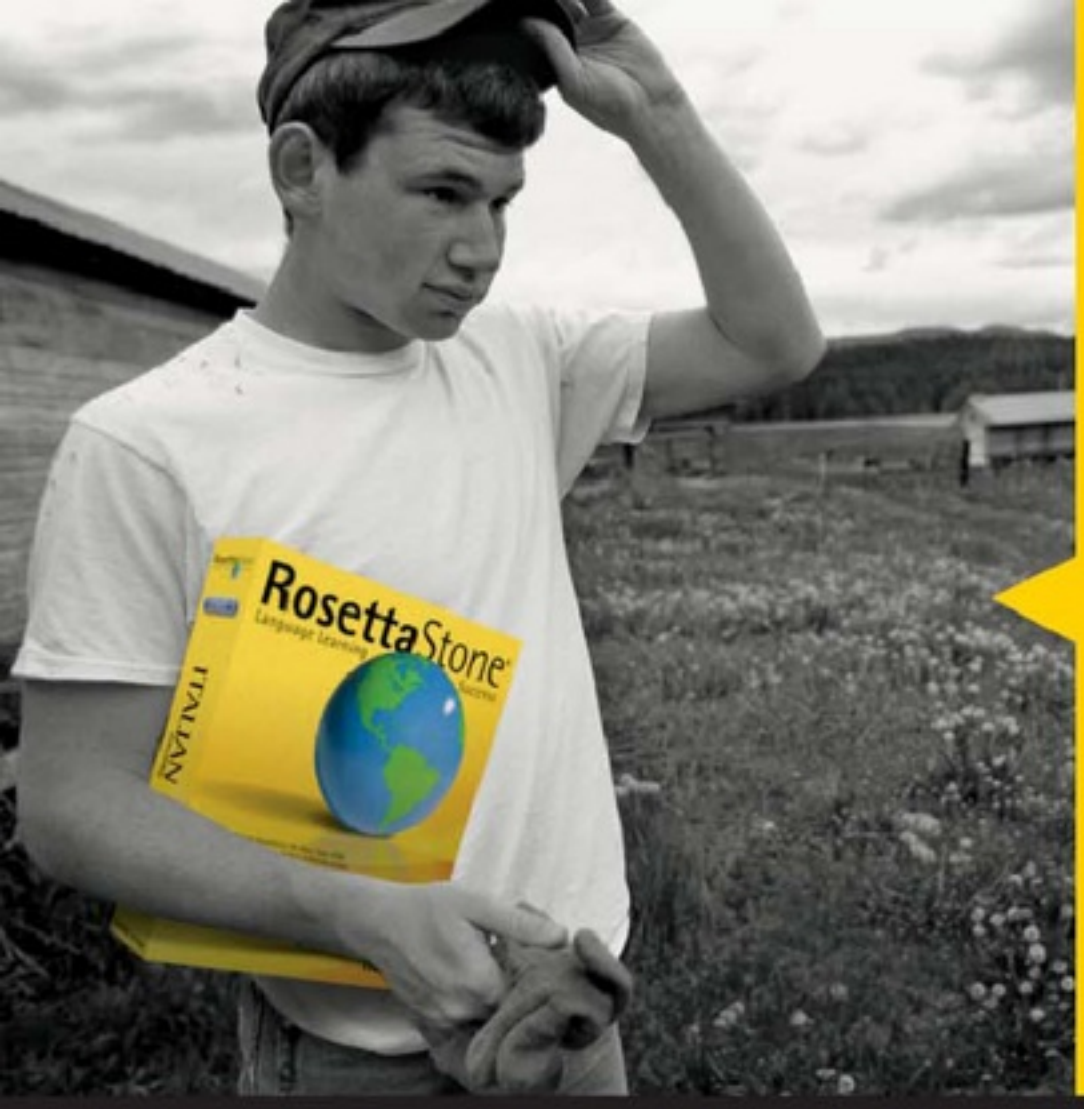
Amy Arbus, photographer: "My favorite portrait is **Sylvia Plachy's photograph of a horse,** on the cover of her book *Unguided Tour.* It is a perfect metaphor for life. The horse's eyes are filled with a sense of desperation and determination. Without both, how would we survive? Sylvia told me it was her self-portrait. I think of it as mine."

Dirck Halstead, photographer and editor of *digitaljournalist.org*: When **Yousuf Karsh photographed Winston Churchill,** he created one of the most important portraits in Western culture. Karsh had a gift for capturing the essence of his subject in the instant of his portrait; he said that a photographer had only a small fraction of a second in which to catch the unconscious gesture that reveals a sitter's hidden secret. Karsh had two minutes to photograph Churchill. The prime minister marched into the room, scowling, cigar in mouth; when he sat down to pose, Karsh leaned forward and plucked the cigar from his lips. Churchill's scowl deepened, and his hand went to his hip; that's the moment Karsh snapped his lens. To truly understand the picture, however, you have to know that Churchill had just watched the British people endure the Blitz. In a famous speech, he'd asked his subjects, 'What is our aim? I can answer in one word. Victory—victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terrors, victory however long and hard the road may be; for without victory there is no survival.' Churchill gave us these words. Karsh gave us the photo."

Mary Ellen Mark, photographer: "I think an epic image for all time is **'Satyric Dancer' by André Kertész.** It has every quality that makes it an iconic image—it's whimsical, strange, and very beautiful. This is a humorous moment, but then again, it's not—there could be something disturbing about it. Kertész was a master of design, composition, and atmosphere...and think when it was taken—1926—it's so ahead of its time, so original and beautiful. Kertész had a very unique vision; he could find images anywhere. He is one of the great photographers, a real treasure." —AS TOLD TO JUDITH GELMAN MYERS



From top: Churchill by Karsh; "Satyric Dancer" by Kertész.



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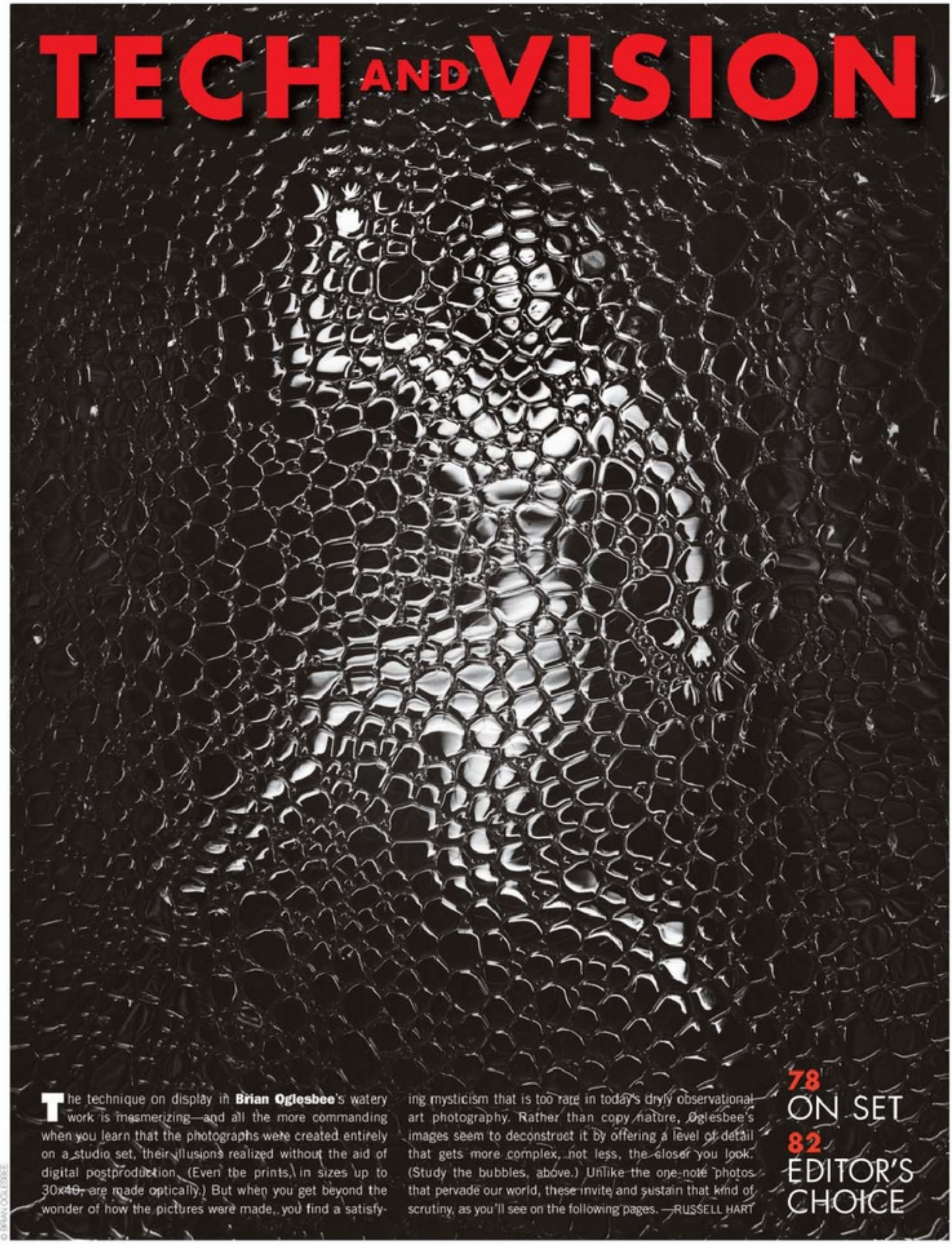

The technique on display in **Brian Oglesbee**'s watery work is mesmerizing—and all the more commanding when you learn that the photographs were created entirely on a studio set, their illusions realized without the aid of digital postproduction. (Even the prints, in sizes up to 30x40, are made optically.) But when you get beyond the wonder of how the pictures were made, you find a satisfying mysticism that is too rare in today's dryly observational art photography. Rather than copy nature, Oglesbee's images seem to deconstruct it by offering a level of detail that gets more complex, not less, the closer you look. (Study the bubbles, above.) Unlike the one-note photos that pervade our world, these invite and sustain that kind of scrutiny, as you'll see on the following pages. —RUSSELL HART

78 ON SET

82 EDITOR'S CHOICE

© BRIAN OGLESBEE

© BRIAN OGLESBEE (2)

THE LIFE AQUATIC

WATER AND LIGHT—NOT ONE PIXEL OF DIGITAL IMAGE EDITING—ARE THE BASIC INGREDIENTS OF BRIAN OGLESBEE'S MYSTERIOUS FIGURE STUDIES.

BY JEFF WIGNALL

Refraction, reflection, and a fan shape Brian Oglesbee's bubbly views.

Almost five years ago Brian Oglesbee was invited to show his images at the NY PhotoGroup Salon, an informal gathering of some of New York City's most elite photographers. The group, which meets one evening a month, counts Jay Maisel, Howard Schatz, and Gary Gladstone among its members. Oglesbee wasn't the only presenter that night. His turn was to come right after retrospectives by Walter Iooss and Arnold Newman and just before a showing of Schatz's newest work—probably not the spot a newcomer would choose in such a competitive lineup.

As Oglesbee projected his first slide—a black-and-white image of a mysterious female figure peering up from the inky depths of a pool of bubble-covered water—there were some curious murmurs. Then the photographer showed a detail of the first slide that revealed tiny repetitions of the same figure in a cluster of the bubbles. A slide of a third, even tighter detail showed with utter clarity that the same figure was repeated perfectly in each and every bubble facet. You could practically hear jaws dropping as a barrage of questions came at Oglesbee from the darkened room.

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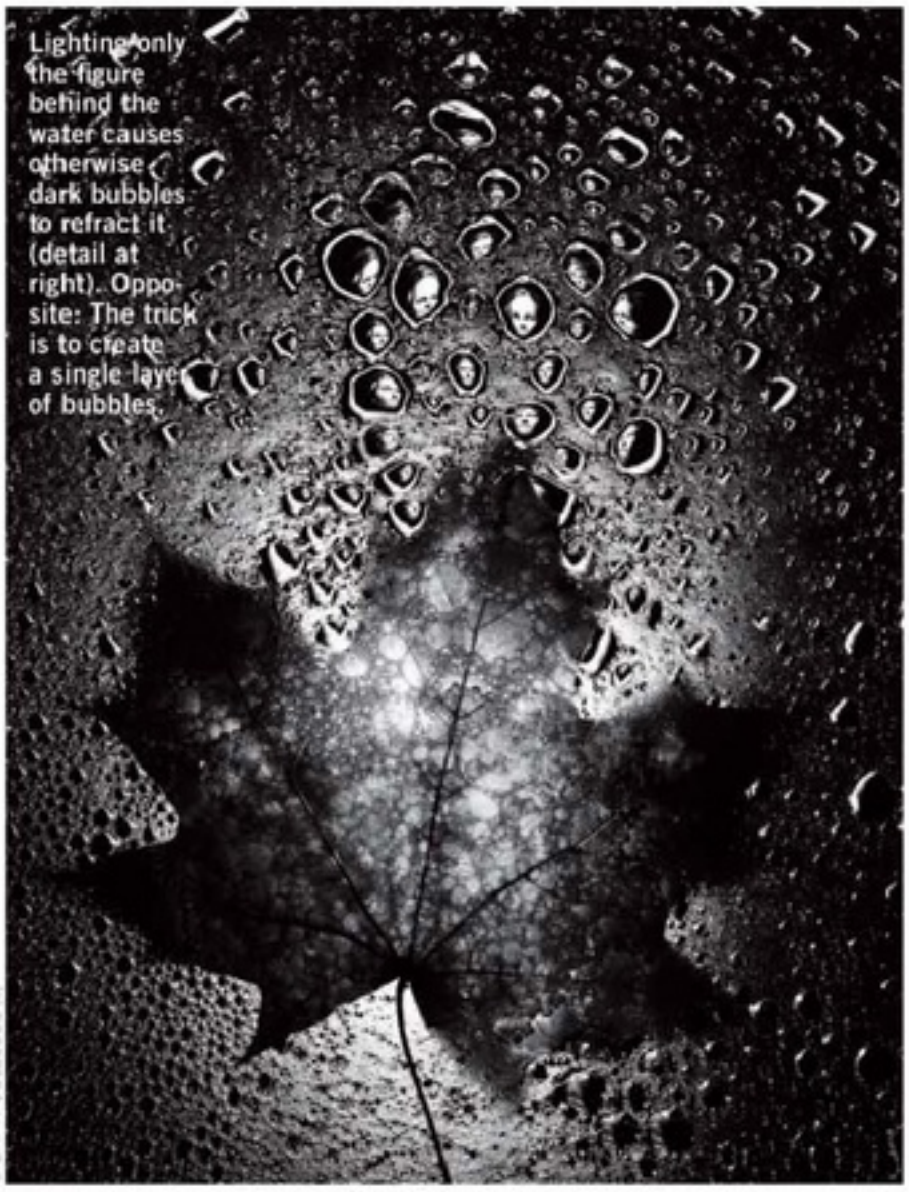

Lighting only the figure behind the water causes otherwise dark bubbles to refract it (detail at right). Opposite: The trick is to create a single layer of bubbles.

© BRIAN OGLESBEE (3)

The photographer began to describe how the images were created, explaining to an astonished crowd that all of them were done in-camera with a single exposure—and printed optically, with no digital image editing. "This is what the camera saw," he said. Arnold Newman spoke up from the front row. "You mean you didn't use any Photoshop?" he asked. No, said Oglesbee, no Photoshop.

Iooss, Schatz, and some others in the salon were so impressed that they asked to acquire Oglesbee's photographs, spectacular black-and-white silver prints in sizes up to 30x40 inches. The work that wowed them is from an ambitious self-assigned project that he calls, informally, the "Water Series." The images grew out of both a lighting and a mechanical challenge: to find a way to photograph water in the studio so that it looked like the surface of a pond or stream. "I wanted

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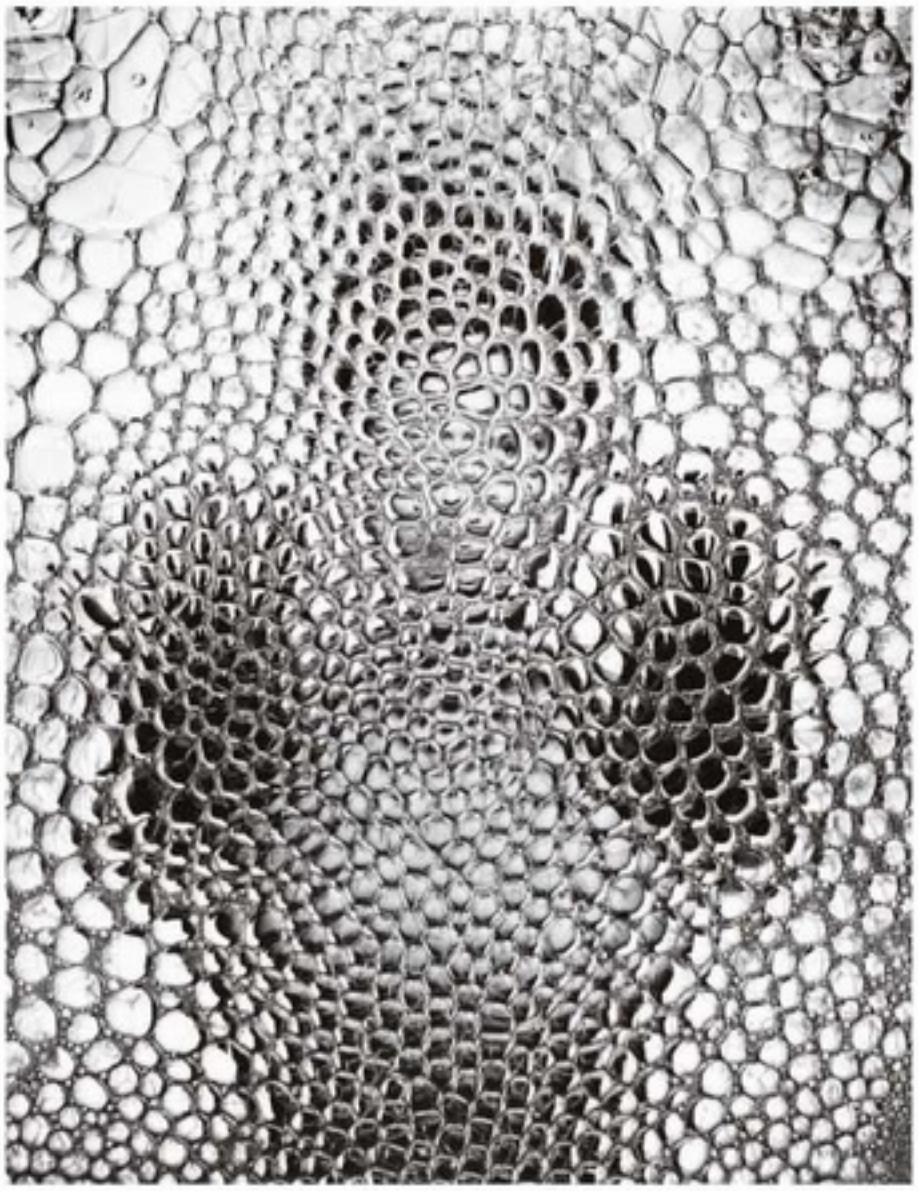

to see if I could mimic the look of naturally occurring water in the studio, and combine it with a figure," says Oglesbee, who began his career in Chicago's Montgomery Ward photo unit and for many years shot the Light Impressions catalog.

That challenge led to a 13-year project that will culminate this September with the publication of *Aquatique* (Insight Editions, $75), Oglesbee's first monograph. The oversized book will contain more than 100 quadratone images from the series that has consumed Oglesbee's creative ambition—not to mention his studio. That's saying something, because Oglesbee works out of a 6,000-square-foot 1880's dance hall in upstate Wellsville, New York.

For his first attempt at shooting water in the studio, Oglesbee created a shallow pool of water in an improvised tank, lighting up a big reflector behind it to create the feeling of sky reflecting on the water's surface. He took a small fan and aimed it at the water to mimic the effect of wind. "I was amazed," he recalls. "It looked completely real." Then, working with a 4x5 view camera and a model posed either in the water or above it, Oglesbee started to shoot.

About nine or ten shots into the series, a chance observation radically expanded the scope of the experiments. Oglesbee made an oversized enlargement of a photo with a cluster of bubbles in it, and discovered tiny images of the model refracted in the bubbles' surfaces. "My reaction was 'Oh my God!'," he recalls. "I didn't see them when I was shooting, or even in the 11x14-inch prints." Bubbles immediately became a central focus of the series. *(continued on page 87)*

EDITOR'S CHOICE

PENTAX K10D

RAW STRENGTH SETS THIS TEN-MEGAPIXEL D-SLR APART.

PENTAX K10D

10.2	1.5X	2.5 INCH LCD
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In the current face-off among ten-megapixel D-SLRs, the Pentax K10D asserts itself with professionally valuable assets: a robust, fully weatherized exterior; body-integral image stabilization; built-in automatic dust removal; and the unique ability to "develop" RAW files in-camera to suit your taste and needs.

Physically, the K10D is a departure from Pentax's previous six-megapixel D-SLRs—larger, heavier, and more solid in its construction. Even the shutter and mirror sound confident. We found the new camera comfortably shaped and ample in its rubberized grip surfaces. Unprecedented for a D-SLR in its class, the K10D is protected top to bottom by 72 environmental seals and ultra-secure latches for its memory card and battery compartments—specs comparable with what you'll find in cameras costing hundreds, or even thousands, more.

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The K10D's bright, sharp pentaprism viewfinder is similarly top-drawer, among the biggest we've seen at this price level and above. It's perfect for manual focusing with older Pentax K mount optics. That said, its 11-point wide-area autofocus system is much improved over previous versions. Nine of the points are cross-type arrays, which probably contributes to the K10D's fast and accurate motion tracking.

Another major asset is the K10D's sensor-shifting Shake Reduction (SR) system. Because it's built into the camera body, it works with any ordinary, existing Pentax lens. As advertised, it let us shoot hand-held and still get sharp results at shutter speeds up to four stops slower than we otherwise would have needed—just like dedicated but more expensive image-stabilized optics from other manufacturers. The image sensor's ability to move lets it do another neat trick: vibrate each time you turn the camera on to shake off dust particles and ensure spotless pictures.

The K10D's brains match its physique. Two innovative new exposure modes complement the usual metered-manual, priority AE, and program modes. In Sv (Sensitivity Value) mode, essentially "ISO priority," we set the ISO, and the camera chose both the shutter speed and lens aperture. In TAv (Shutter and Aperture Value) mode, we manually set shutter speed and lens aperture and the camera automatically adjusted the ISO to achieve proper exposure. (This mode's range is ISO 100 to 400, same as in auto ISO.) Trusting the photographer, the K10D dispenses completely with scene modes (hooray!), though it retains full auto just in case.

For us, though, the K10D's biggest wow is its unique in-camera processing capability, made possible by a powerful new imaging engine. For example, we were able to take a digital preview test shot, adjust white balance, and see those adjustments live on screen. We could also preview and apply digital filters to JPEGs we'd previously shot—then save the effects as new files. Cooler still, we could develop RAW images as new JPEGs and push or pull their exposure in-camera—or change their size, quality, contrast, sharpness, saturation, and white balance as needed.

No camera is perfect. The K10D has no wireless flash capability, and its excellent, encyclopedic menu deserves better cosmetics. We had slight gripes with JPEG quality, particularly at ISO 1600. But our RAW files, properly tweaked, were superb. All in all, the Pentax K10D is a thrill to use—and a super D-SLR deal. —JONATHAN BARKEY

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(continued from page 71)
of people think I get the effect of the Dutch master paintings by manipulating the image somehow. I don't. The lighting is all done in the studio, when I shoot. I don't do anything in Photoshop that I wouldn't do normally in a darkroom.

"For me, this series of portraits really represents a family business. My wife works with me as an assistant, and of course my daughter is the subject. So between us at home we have a lot of time to think about the pictures. It may take three or four days to discuss together and decide how to do a particular picture. And sometimes we work quickly. Once, when Paula came back from a school trip with a terrible sunburn, we immediately saw that it could be a photograph.

"Some people have wondered whether it is right to make your child the subject of work like this. Some of the pictures contain some nudity. It is a responsibility we take very seriously. We have to live with Paula, and we have to face the consequences that these pictures will be around in 50 years, when she is older. Some people say that a girl of this age is too young to give permission to be photographed; but I think if you listen well to your child, you can know if she is giving permission. You have to be sensitive. As for Paula, she loves to be photographed."

NIGEL PARRY

Nigel Parry

"I make sure everything is planned out before the subject arrives. He or she may have no idea what we're doing until they get there. I get the workable shot—then go for the risky business. You don't want someone to walk out on you at the beginning.

"Politicians are usually fun because they're not wary about photography. They just want to get on with things. Meanwhile, I want to keep them there until the job is done. During the actual shoot, it's a lot of adrenaline, running around all manic, barking orders at my crew. People see me sweat physically, and I demand so much from the people around me that they know we're serious. And usually they just sort of give in."

Lori Grinker

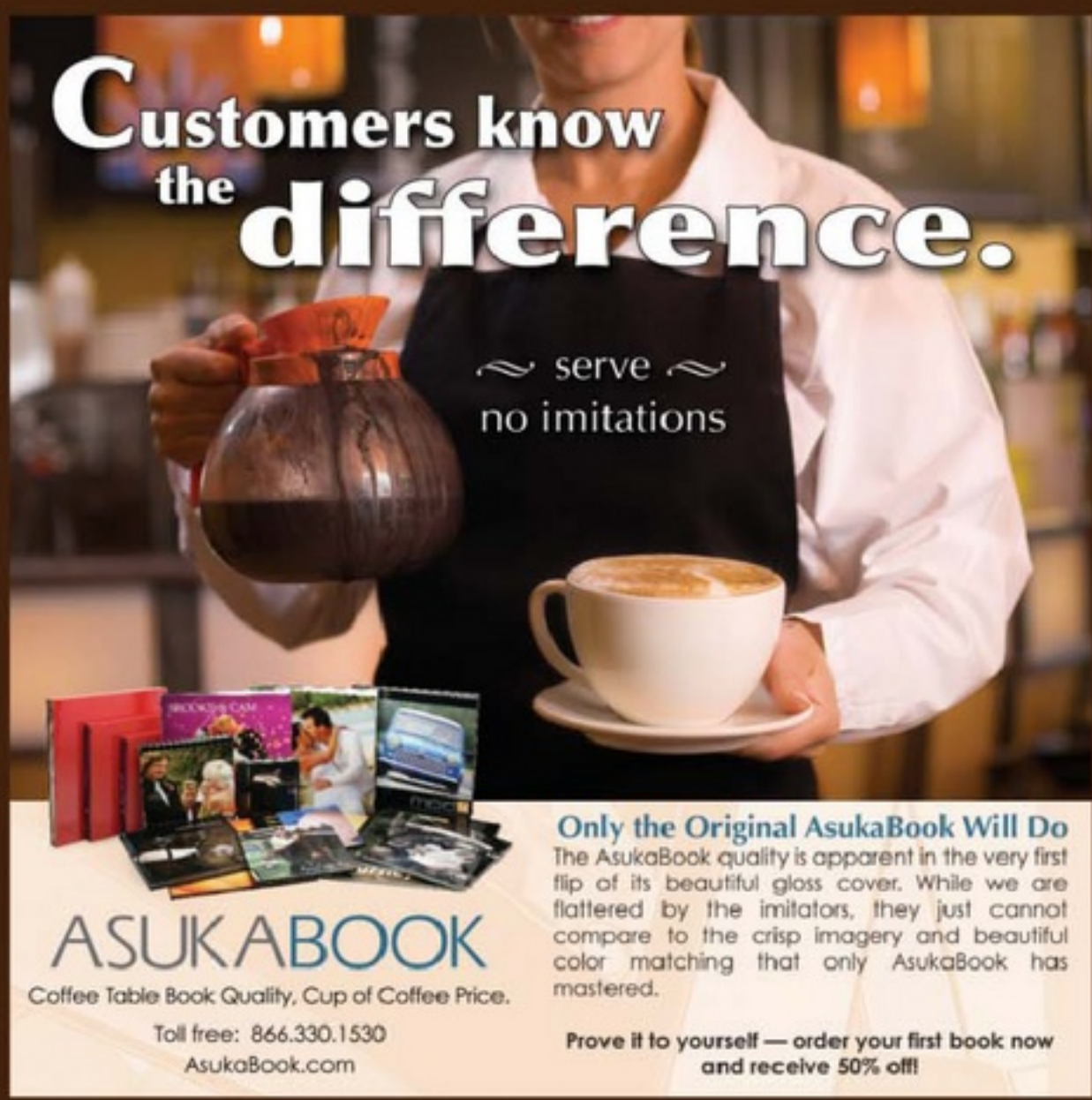
"I think a portrait is a picture that expresses something about that person, that person's life and personality. It does have to have a moment in it; but at the same time it's a bit of the photographer's impression of them or their setting. The way I really like to do portraits is to capture something from someone's life when I'm with them. I think a lot of stories now are being told with portraiture, a journalistic portraiture, as opposed to just portraits for beauty. They're difficult to do. With journalism you have to be in control and think fast; with portraiture you do have more time to create the situation you want, but you also have to know what you want.

LORI GRINKER

"For *Afterwar,* in the beginning I wanted to do stories about the war experience. Later it was more the poetic dimension of the reality, and that turned into one picture from each situation. They're not traditional portraits; it's almost an interior portrait.

"In the photo of Oleg, the Russian man getting acupuncture, it was more comfortable with his prostheses for him to recline, and his wife and daughter were there, and he just looked beautiful to me. I had other pictures of him doing things around the center, but this one went past his wounds.

"*Afterwar* was a very difficult project, and I did it in color, which was especially challenging. When I started I was a black-and-white photographer, and suddenly I was working with no flash, in color, with slide film. And then I was learning to choose film, because I didn't use just one film; I usually used Kodachrome 200 inside and Fujichrome 100 outside. So I was learning to work with the film, and learning how to shoot really slow and make my body into a tripod. I also developed a system of reflectors I bring in now when I'm using ambient light." ■



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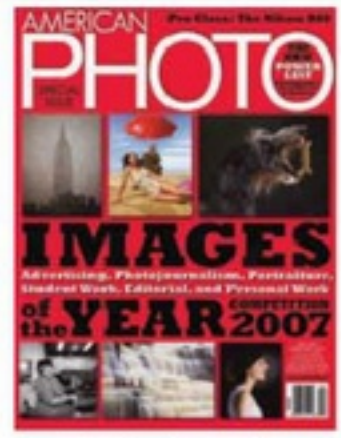

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(continued from page 81) The bubble effect was most dramatic, Oglesbee realized, when the bubbles were just one layer thick, and achieving that was a challenge. "It took a lot of experimenting," he says. "It involves compressed air coming out of multiple nozzles." And while the photographer won't reveal all of his bubbly *modus operandi*, he says that controlling the lighting is key. "If you take a bunch of suds, put it between the camera and the subject, and only illuminate the figure, then you get all these little images floating in blackness."

Creating such an effect takes well-honed problem-solving skills. Indeed, any time Oglesbee has encountered a visual riddle he couldn't solve with existing gear, he has created his own—including complex, sophisticated shooting tables and light stands. (He even manufactures his own line of gear, called the Oglesbee Studio System, which you can learn about at *photoheaven.com*.) He did likewise for the Water Series, building elaborate setups that would accommodate not just water but a human being.

All of the Water Series shots are made, by necessity, with Polaroid Type 55 Positive/Negative film, which produces a top-quality negative in addition to an instant print. "You have to be able to monitor what is happening because a lot of it is choreography," he says. "You have to consider both the pose and the movement of the water, and I might initiate some wave that has to bounce off the other end of the tank and come back before I shoot." It often takes the photographer many days to complete each image, since all its complexity is achieved on set, not with digital manipulation. Oglesbee has grown accustomed to the assumption, even by experienced photographers, that his work involves some degree of digital image-editing. Yet the fact that he simply photographs "what the camera sees" isn't necessary to appreciate the layered mysticism of the images.

Today, Oglesbee's career is more about fine art than commercial work, which is exactly how he likes it. "My goal was always to be an artist first and a commercial photographer second," he says. He even chose his rural location largely so he could pursue personal projects. "I'm out here in the middle of nowhere because I can afford the time and space to do my artwork," he says. Now, most of Oglesbee's earnings come from sales of prints in the Water Series, available through both the Volakis Gallery in Yountville, California and the Fay Gold Gallery in Atlanta. And his collectors have expanded way beyond the membership of the NY PhotoGroup Salon, to include such photographic connoisseurs as Sir Elton John.

To see more of Oglesbee's Water Series, including enlarged details of prints, visit oglesbee.com.

ONE THOUSAND WORDS...

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1000

They are the moments that have impacted our lives... the indelible images that become etched into society's collective mind. In the relatively short time that man has used the power of photography to educate, inspire, document and shape modern culture, Nikon cameras have captured some of the most powerful and poignant moments ever witnessed. Evoking emotion and provoking thought, long after first view – a powerful photograph can render a poet's adjectives pallid; here then is such an image, "a picture is worth a thousand words..."

KEVIN T. GILBERT

© Alex Stevens

Kevin T. Gilbert has the uncanny ability to create images that go beyond the boundaries of the frame and encompass a transcendent reality. A veteran photojournalist who honed his considerable natural abilities as a White House Press Photographer and as Chief Photographer for the Washington Times, Gilbert's pictures do much more than merely tell a story—they distill the essence of life situations with such visual and emotional force that they become icons that rise to the level of fine art.

"The press corps is a highly competitive environment, and I'd always challenge myself to shoot something completely different and more interesting than others in the crowd," he says. "I'd often ask to go last and take pictures from the opposite side, or bring only one lens like a 300mm f/2.8 AF-S VR Nikkor telephoto or a 15mm ultra-wide-angle to force myself to get a unique perspective—it was kind of a game." Gilbert finally found his "ultimate photojournalist experience" in shooting TV reality shows. "I always wanted to do cinematography," he says "but given my impatient temperament, there's no better environment for me than on the set of a movie where I have unlimited access and can tell the story from an insider's perspective. It's definitely the most challenging but also the most fun assignment of my career. I know I've succeeded when the producer looks at my shots and says, 'They're great, but when did you take them? I didn't even know you were there!' "

Discretion and quiet competence were essential in allowing Kevin to create the grand, elegant, superbly composed rear-view portrait of New York real estate mogul Donald Trump on these pages, but what is even more impressive is his brilliant use of back lighting and the way he conveys the power, spirit, and identity of the subject without showing his face. "Trump is one of those people, like Bill Clinton, who creates a visceral presence when he enters a room," notes Gilbert. "He's pretty self-conscious around photographers but by the time I was shooting the second season of The Apprentice I got to the point where he could ignore me. As soon as he walked over to the colossal south-facing window on the 92nd floor of the Trump World Tower for a moment of quiet reflection, I knew this was the right time and place to capture a significant moment in Donald Trump's life- one that embodies the essence of the true person, and one that not many people get to see. He is looking at his city like a king surveying his domain. I took a quick shot, but then fired off a series, recomposing to emphasize the monumental form of the window frame. The best image was my third or fourth shot, but as soon as I was finished I got goose bumps—I knew I had created something that had a whole lot of meaning."

Gilbert took the Trump picture with a Nikon D70 with a 17-55mm f/2.8 Nikkor lens set at 17mm, shooting hand held at f/2.8 and 1/40 sec. "Most photographers on the set install their cameras in a sound-deadening blimp, but I never use one," he says. "The D70 delivers excellent image quality and it's much quieter and lighter than other digital SLRs. These days I generally use the Nikon D2Xs with long Nikon lenses for sports and the D200 with shorter lenses for photojournalism—a 3-body, 3-lens outfit for each so I don't have to change lenses. I'll be going to Africa shortly and I'll also be taking a few Nikon D80s, which are small, quiet, light and provide incredible image quality for the weight. I might also take along a Nikon D40, which is even smaller and lighter-a heck of a lot of camera for the money. When I put a Nikon camera in my hands, it's part of my personality-things just work. All the dials and settings are in smart places. It feels right, and of course it's dependable and the quality is outstanding. As far as lenses go I'd pick the 17-55mm f/2.8 AF-S DX Nikkor as the most flexible short zoom, but I really love the superb image quality and reach of the 500mm f/4. My top choice in terms of overall picture quality and versatility is the 200-400mm f/4 AF-S VR Nikkor, which is fantastic even in low light. I never use a tripod, and with the vibration-reduction (VR) system enabled, and I don't even think twice about shooting at slow shutter speeds."

In addition to being a great photojournalist, Gilbert is deeply committed to photographic education, and giving something back to the field that has supported him for a quarter century. He's a seven-time mentor on the Nikon-sponsored Mentor Series treks and the founder and CEO of Blue Pixel, "a group of photographers and videographers whose mission is to educate and inspire photographers around the world." According to Gilbert, "All the things that drive the digital ecosystem are enhanced by education, and that's why we're helping an entire generation of consumers, prosumers, and pros worldwide to take better pictures, upgrade their content, and do justice to the visual history of the 21st century. Blue Pixel works with world-class companies to train employees, and via the Nikon School, teaches photography and digital imaging to over 15,000 students per year. Every member of the company must maintain the status of a working photographer—I wouldn't trust a teacher or consultant who isn't a real pro who shoots lots of pictures!"

If Kevin's photographic insights and commitment to photography are profound and sophisticated, his basic philosophy of life is refreshingly simple: "As long as I am having fun, meeting fascinating people, and doing interesting things, I feel very blessed. The first time I saw that Trump image on my LCD it really made my day—it tells a story, but it also works because it expresses my real love for photography. You can't ask for more than that."

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What was Canon thinking when they developed the only cameras available with a 35mm Full-Frame CMOS Sensor?*

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"Exactly what I was thinking."

Bruce Dorn One of the most important aspects of portrait shooting is communication. Establishing a rapport and understanding what the subject wants is the first step to a great shot. It's very much the same thing that Canon does. They listen to photographers like me, and they respond to my need for capturing incredible detail. And with the full-frame CMOS sensor in the EOS-1Ds Mark II and the EOS 5D, I get the resolution needed for making big, beautiful prints, just like my old medium-format cameras. Not to mention the fact that with no conversion factor, my favorite portrait lens, the EF 24-105mm f/4L IS USM acts exactly as it should. And with the smaller, lighter EOS 5D, that technology goes wherever I go. And, when you add a PIXMA Pro printer into the workflow, well, now you're talking.

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